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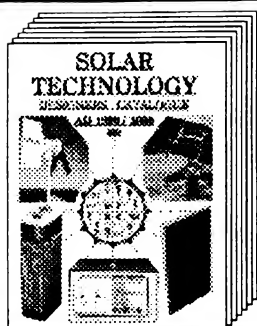
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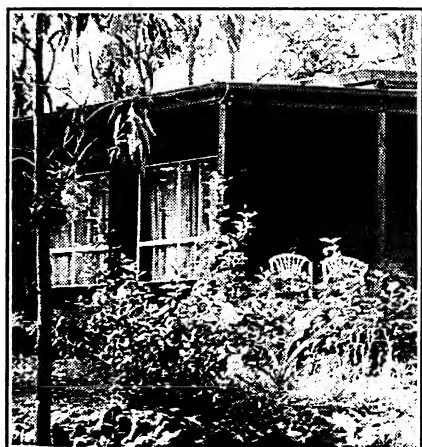
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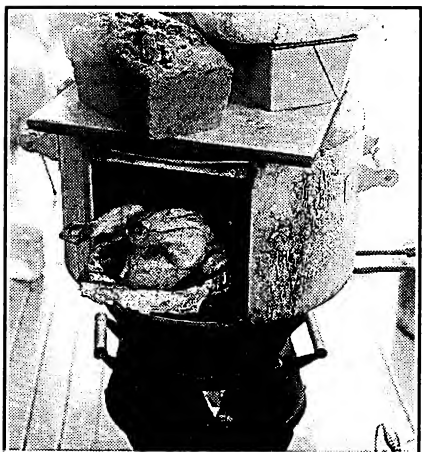
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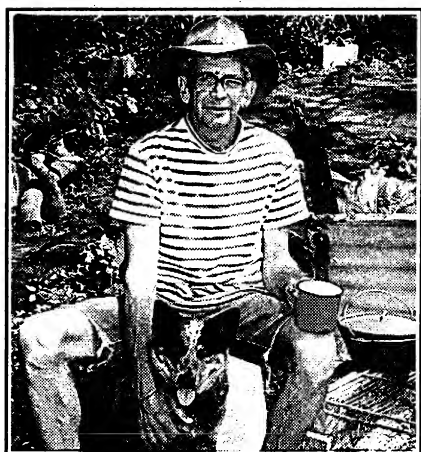
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COVER PHOTOS

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Back Cover: Frank and Liz Fekonia lead a challenging but immensely rewarding lifestyle amidst spectacular beauty. Read about their achievements on page 6.

Edited by Megg Miller and Mary Horsfall.

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GUMNUT GOSSIP

by Megg Miller.

The final issue each year is always rather significant, a coming together of our year's efforts, but this December the magazine has the distinction of also being our last for the millennium and so we hope you enjoy the hours of reading its contents. It's an issue Mary and myself will long remember too, not just because of the millennium association but because it's been a veritable nightmare to produce. If something could go wrong it did, not once but twice and even thrice. The sighing from Mary's desk has been so loud and so constant it's disturbed my concentration and I've come to regard it as a barometer of our progress. So frequent has the need been for the stress-abating SOS remedy that I've had to source out a new bottle. We felt it a shame no alcohol accompanied the herbal remedies although they are very effective without.

During the busiest period of the deadline when errors were alarmingly constant and I kept misplacing the finished, outputted pages a strange fax arrived. 'No more nightmares' it promised in very large bold type. There was no accompanying note, or even contact number. 'We've been saved,' I jokingly promised Mary, and put the directive on the front of the filing cabinet for reassurance. Whatever its story, it lightened our anxiety and provided a focus for remembering that all things pass. A note on my desk next morning in Mary's handwriting saying 'we've been here before' reinforced this thought.

Back in GR 73, I wrote, 'Some issues come together without a hitch, others well, they are a headache from start to finish. This one has been like that – not surprising really as we have had new staff vainly trying to grasp the office procedures and at the same time learn our page make-up system'.

Along with the gremlins we have had staff struggling with the unfamiliarities of style and our machines. By next issue we'll be on top again. Vicki I introduced in our June/July magazine, and Sally, mentioned last issue, arrived in the latter phase of its production. Now I have pleasure in introducing Natalie, who has outputted most of this magazine with great dedication, quite a job for a new chum, and also our latest recruit, Ms Suni Miller. Suni probably needs no introduc-

tion, and although she won't be specifically working on *Grass Roots*, will help out when necessary. Our team is a lively diverse one and discussion at morning tea can range from the antics of Vicki's little ones through to what Suni or Natalie did on the weekend. It's never dull!

Arriving midmorning recently, I walked into what sounded like an office party. Actually it was the laughter of Mary and David, who were being entertained by Trish, an amazing reader from the Gulf of Carpentaria. This intrepid woman was down visiting family and regaled us with stories of the far north, of being housebound for weeks on end due to flooding, of the immense distances travelled, the absence of a phone there and reliance on the radio, the lack of simple services and need for self-reliance, even of the life she spent on fishing boats. We were speechless – what an amazing life some readers live. We'd love to hear more from far north readers.

We all have predetermined ideas of who we think GR readers are and just as meeting a larger than life person like Trish helps erode the illusion so too does the contents of many a letter we receive. GR folk are very difficult to categorise.

One note received some months back, was from a 21 year old single guy living in a bachelor pad bungalow. Liam was keen to establish a small permaculture garden and wanted some information for establishing an indoor forest. 'I thought I'd ask you . . . as you're partly to blame, I was brought up on GR by my parents since the year dot and have been addicted – very happily – to the self-sufficiency dream every since.'

Goodness, we never dreamt there were second-generation readers buying and following the magazine, nor that trendy young people were necessarily keen on a simple hands-on lifestyle.

Then, just as I was finishing writing, two letters arrived in the mail that deserve mention here. Richard Turnley is with the Air Force, Shaine Stephen the Army, and both are currently deployed in East Timor as part of the peace keeping operations. They are keen readers of GR with dreams of acquiring land and achieving a self-sufficient lifestyle. Shaine is hoping one day to escape to north-east Tassie with fiancée Jo and would love to hear from



readers who have achieved this goal. Richard's interest is in a bush block and permaculture and he also would like to correspond with similar thinking readers. Some requests in his letter need attention now and are included in the hope solutions can be speedily provided. 'Could someone spare a few bars of long-lasting natural soap, the army supplies are creating havoc with [Richard's] skin? Help too is needed re problems with feet and insects. Is tea tree oil the best remedy for tinea and where can it be secured? And a chemical-free mozzie repellent is urgently needed. Finally, our ration packs are incredibly monotonous and barely nutritious – we would dearly appreciate some *real* jerky or dried fruits to supplement our canned food diet.' Northern readers in particular may be able to help with remedies or products suitable for the climatic conditions in East Timor, while others with dehydrating facilities may have jerky or dried fruits they can share. It may be a nice gesture too to pop a card in the mail for these boys. I'm sure all readers will join with us in wishing Shaine and Richard and their associates a safe and speedy return, and that peace and prosperity is returned to the people of East Timor. 'They truly are GR people and their courage amid suffering is well worth mentioning'. Contact Shaine Stephen at PO Box 1064, Liverpool BC, NSW 1871; and Richard Turnley, LAC Turnley A327880, RAAF 2AFDS Interfet, OP Warden, AFPO 5, International Mail Centre, Sydney NSW 2090.

With Christmas just weeks away life is bound to become busier and more demanding for many people. The 'silly' season is a real misnomer, it would be more appropriate to call it the stress season. Take care during the rush to meet obligations and set a few minutes aside to ponder the real meaning of Christmas. It is, after all, what we are celebrating. Our wishes to all for a safe and happy Christmas. May peace – both personal and global – light our journey into the new millennium.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND A MILLION DOLLAR VIEW

by Tara Andre, Eudlo, Qld.

Take two people from separate ends of Europe who met on the other side of the world, here in Australia; a ruggedly beautiful location on the Sunshine Coast; homegrown and homemade food; pig and chook tractors; permaculture; lush subtropical growth; mix it with hard work. Result? We're sure you'll agree it qualifies for the description of 'paradise' many GR readers are seeking. Join Tara Andre as she visits Liz and Frank Fekonia's spectacular property.



The path to Liz and Frank Fekonia's house is definitely not for the faint of heart. From the carpark, countless steps led up a steep rise and, just when we thought we had arrived at their house, there were more steps to ascend. At last we arrived at their kitchen door gasping. At this stage looking around was dangerous because the spectacular view stole our last breath.

Smiling and laughing, Frank and Liz invited us in through their temporary accommodation and on to the outdoor patio where they rewarded and revived us with homemade wine. Up there amongst the clouds, we relaxed and heard an amazing story of survival and self-sufficiency.

When asked about their backgrounds, Liz commented that Frank was a true

peasant and no stranger to work. He was born in Slovenia, once a part of the republic of Yugoslavia. The family worked on a farm and times were hard. A survivalist life was one of necessity, not choice. All children had to work from the moment they could walk and Frank was no exception. Jobs, including carrying grains, taking cows to the fields, bringing water from the well and milking, were all done by the younger children. Although Frank went to school, there was never time for toys or play, only work from early morning till late at night.

As a teenager Frank was forced into the army. A man with strong principles, he didn't agree with policies and vocal opposition landed him in trouble with the authorities. Despondent about his life in general he decided to abscond

from the army and flee the country. This decision was the beginning of many adventures, including almost being killed three times.

On the third escape attempt Frank was successful. To reach freedom he rowed a boat almost to Italy and was picked up by Italian fishermen in the middle of the Adriatic Sea. Taken into a refugee camp in Italy, he was given an option of migrating to Australia or Canada. Luckily for Liz he chose Australia and spent some years working as a builder in Sydney.

Nostalgia for his homeland was his constant companion and, although he remembered working hard on the land, he also recalled that life was good. After travelling to the Sunshine Coast, Frank chose to purchase their present property

because the view reminded him of Slovenia and offered total privacy. Although there are many benefits of this choice, there are also challenges, but Frank and Liz take these in their stride. They experienced major earth slips during recent rains, but carefully planned strategies and a PET day is seeing many of these problems addressed. (PET stands for Permaculture Energy Transfer, where each month up to 30 members of Permaculture/Noosa converge to work on each other's properties.)

The other major difficulty is a rampant, unidentified climber which Frank and Liz have labelled that 'B.....y legume, climbing thing'. They have found this plant a blessing and a curse. Luckily the chooks, pigs, goats and cows love to eat it, which keeps it under some control. The downside is that it strangles everything in reach. Undaunted it will destroy many of their new plants and it has even been known to wipe out a 17 year old avocado which had grown 15 – 20 metres high.

Most people would also think the extreme pitch of their block a downside, but Frank, whose legs developed from a childhood of traversing slopes, doesn't see it as a problem. He does think Liz's first experience of getting used to her new home worth a joke. 'Poor Liz came from Holland,' he says. 'She was only used to walking along flat land.' Liz quickly adapted, however.

The couple's goal is to become as self-sufficient as reasonably possible in providing their own food and that of their animals. Their property already supplies an abundance of pawpaws and bananas which respond to subtropical conditions. Liz and Frank also produce meat of every kind, cheese, butter and vegetables, and Liz grinds organic grain to make bread. She says they are so

used to home-produced bread that a recently purchased loaf of bread tasted like poison and was quickly discarded. Liz also prepares herbal tinctures and ointments. Wine making is one of their favourite hobbies. To sit and gaze at the evening sky with a glass of homemade brew in hand is a way of unwinding and rewarding themselves.

Their typical day starts around 6.30am. The first hour and a half comprises milking, taking the goats out to browse, feeding and caring for pigs. A hearty breakfast is next on the agenda, and then on to house building. Their house, although still in construction, is a wonder in concrete. When finished it will consist of two stories offering accommodation a millionaire would envy. Frank chose concrete because it is inexpensive, low in maintenance, and offers good insulation. The strength of concrete will also ensure it is safe from cyclones, white ants and vermin.

While helping Frank on the building site Liz still finds the time to explore the benefits of pig tractors. 'Everything in this system is related in one big cycle,' she says. 'The cows supply us with milk for cheese making and the pigs with whey. The pig tractor helps to grow potatoes, wheat and maize and other crops.'

Small black pigs are the most suitable

for the pig tractors because they are hardy, don't suffer sunburn, and are used to living outside. The system works on three long rectangular strips and the perimeter is planted with arrowroot to create permanent chop-and-drop, plus a weed barrier. The cycle starts, Liz says, by moving the pig tractor after it has been sited for 24 hours. Chook tractors can also be utilised after the first move to level the pig manure and to help eradicate weed seeds. The tractor is then moved to a position beside the first strip. The first strip is then laid with animal bedding, manure, chop-and-drop mulch, and topped with grass mulch. Then it is planted with potatoes. When potatoes are harvested a mulch layer is already finely broken down for corn, broad beans, soya beans etc.

After the pigs have been moved to the position to create the third strip, this middle area is planted with pigeon peas, which are used as mulch for the first and third strip.

The third strip is sown very thickly with a green manure such as sorghum. Then sorghum is slashed or pulled up and top-dressed as in the first strip. The pig tractor is repeated when the strip becomes overgrown. Liz recommends this as an excellent way to build up soil with minimum effort. 'The animals do most of the work,' she says. Liz feels the pig tractor

system is superior to a similar system using chooks. It is faster and the pigs dig deep into the soil clearing vegetation and enabling the seeds to germinate and take root.

Visiting Liz and Frank is like stepping back to a time when most people knew how to supply their own food source. Their property and lifestyle is a wonderful example of how much can be achieved with a little money, lots of energy and heavy sprinklings of enthusiasm.



Pig tractors are an intrinsic part of the permaculture system, the pigs quickly clearing and 'cultivating' strips of land.

DELICIOUSLY DRIED

by Neville Jackson, Tingha, NSW.

Last time I described how to make a cheap solar food drier. Now it's time to put it to use. All produce should be sound, clean and dry, with different foods on separate shelves and not touching each other or any metal.

VEGIES & HERBS

Peas & Beans

For peas and beans to use as pulses, dry as seeds with a sprig of any of the varieties of dried mint to enhance the flavour. Beans prefer a bay leaf in each jar.

Garlic & Onions

Garlic cloves and onions are peeled and sliced 3 – 4 mm thick. Dried, they are very useful as a backup to fresh alliums.

Pumpkin

Pumpkin, peeled and sliced to 10 mm thick is great for winter scones and soups, or to mash.

Chillies

Dry as is, or open and remove seeds for a milder flavour.

Tomatoes

Place in hot boiled water to scald for easy removal of skins. To a dish of cold water add a teaspoon of citric acid powder. This will prevent blackening of the tomatoes during the drying process. Cut small ones into halves, larger ones into 5 – 10 mm slices. Dip slices in citric acid solution, lay on absorbent cloth in dryer. Turn over pieces when dry to touch. When dried, tomatoes should be leathery. A dried basil leaf in the container will impart extra flavour.

Herbs

Pick after the dew has dried off and before flowering for best flavour and oils.

Fruits

Fruits are just as easy to dry, although some, like apples, tend to oxidise and brown. For any that do, use the citric acid solution as for tomatoes.

Fruit slices of 10 mm thick are dipped and then laid on absorbent cloth to dry.



Grapes

These are picked fully ripe and after a rinse to remove dust are left as small bunches. Turn every 2 – 3 days until grapes can be flattened between your fingers to a rubbery disc. Store in cool, dry and ant-proof containers.

Figs

Figs, fully ripe, washed and destalked, are pricked all over and placed in a pan. Make up a preserving solution of six cups sugar, three cups water and three tablespoons of white or cider vinegar for 2.75 kg of figs. Bring the figs to the boil then simmer gently for two hours. Drain figs, place on washable absorbent cloth in dryer. Solar dry until figs are in a soft leathery state. Roll lightly in caster sugar. Best packed in an airtight container lined with greaseproof paper and kept in a cool place where only you can find them. Just

too delicious!

The preserving solution can be diluted and re-used for the second batch of figs, or is wonderful as syrup on ice cream.

Seeds

As well as a wide variety of foods and herbs for year-round use, the cabinet is invaluable for drying seeds for seed banks.

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CHRISTMAS CARD RITUAL

by Jose Robinson, Wild Cattle Island, Qld.

With fingers poised on my computer, I prepare to remedy a year of neglect by composing my annual Christmas messages to friends and relations. I cannot bear the photocopied epistles we get from some sources which send out the same copy to all and sundry, with just a different name and address at the top. It is so impersonal.

From the beginning of the festive season in late November or early December (yes it does seem to begin earlier each year in the shopping malls) most of us become the beneficiaries of the important (or unimportant) trivia or news that we all seem to receive (and send out) of the year's crop of happenings in and around the home front. I always look forward to receiving this precis form of news from distant and not-so-distant friends and relations, most of whom we've neglected throughout the year.

Let's face it, most of us haven't been in touch with these card senders since this time last year. It is not that they haven't been in our thoughts from time to time, but the flow of everyday fast living in this day and age tends to not allow sufficient time for lengthy pondering of how (for instance) Aunt Polly's hip replacement is going, and so on.

On the incoming Christmas cards I will no doubt hear of a few additions to families, a few passings on to the next world, a few operations, and of course lots of newsy holiday jottings from Spain, Jamaica, or wherever.

Among the belated greetings after December 25, and some even after January 1, are often lengthy epistles from the USA, or Indonesia, or even South America, bringing answers to queries we placed in our earlier cards and notes.

All these warm and exciting and interesting messages are of momentous importance to us at the time. We line them up on the dining room cabinet, or sometimes hang them on fancy string for other local friends and relations to read and enjoy. After I remove them on the twelfth night of Christmas, we both read through all the most interesting cards and mes-

sages once more and make sure we've attended to any requiring replies. They are carefully ticked up against last year's list and placed in a strong elastic band and put in the usual spot in my office cupboard. At the same time, the previous year's cards are pulled out, the blank sides cut off and stapled into lots of small notepads for the telephone desk. Mostly I can't bear to place perfectly good writing space into the compost or paper recycling bin, so it gets a second life. Throughout the forthcoming year, as I write shopping lists or telephone messages on the back of these cards, I enjoy the Christmas messages of the previous year one more time. The current year's cards, usually remain on the shelf untouched until the following Christmas aftermath, then go through the same procedure.

On the other side of the coin, come October each year, I usually begin to seriously give thought to the design of my current year's Christmas cards. You see, I never buy mine in stores, I always like to send a little piece of me and home with the festive season message, be it ever so simple.

Some years back it was a screen-printed series, another year it was a thumbprint. Other years it has been dried flowers set in recycled paper and once it was photos of the Island reproduced. Last year it was sheep's fleece dyed green and glued behind a cut-out Christmas tree. Each year I try to think up something fresh and surprising. Some of my distant friends have told me they have the complete series going back many, many years. That is surely a beautiful and meaningful tribute and I really appreciate it. I must admit, I have kept a rough sort of file on my Christmas card



designs so I won't repeat them

I find the simple approach with Christmas card designs is best; then

when you write your few lines of selective personal messages, the design doesn't override the written words. For example; my thumbprint was the quickest and simplest yet. If you want to try this, just make a coloured stripe across the bottom of the plain folded card, either painted or with coloured paper glued on. Dip the pad of your thumb into a saucer of thickish acrylic paint the same colour as the stripe. A few rough stamps onto a piece of scrap paper to test the print is a good idea. Then line up the cards and press your thumb firmly onto each card. This results in a personal print which absolutely nobody can duplicate. You can print three or four cards or more before redipping. This all depends on how thick you have the paint or ink. Coloured stamp pads work well too.

A paperbark card is another easy one to do. Cut a round (or any shape) piece from the front of the card. Select a few thin strips of soft paperbark from a

melaleuca tree. Choose the most interesting multishaded pieces. Using scissors, cut sizes which are slightly larger than the hole. Glue the insert carefully around the edges of the right side so it fits under the cutout on the front of the card. Glue a piece of plain paper over the back of the bark to hide the rough edges. If you choose, you can etch a simple design into the paperbark using a fire stick. Easy outlines such as a fish or grass tree look great. Heat the tip of a stick in a candle flame and burn the design into the bark. Place the cards under a weight till glue dries, using a piece of silicon paper between each card so they won't stick together. Silicon paper is the backing which you tear off Contact or Fabulon.

Personalised screen printed cards are quite easy to do. (Refer my articles in *Grass Roots* numbers 29, 100, 101 & 102.) A run of 20 to 40 cards can be run off from the one paper stencil, depending on how quickly you work.

My 1998 cards were a silhouette Christmas tree cut out and small pieces of lamb's wool dyed green glued on behind the cutout. Even small pieces of fluffy fabric in lieu of wool look great. Tiny flat buttons can be sewn on to the tree for decoration. Even some of those stick-on silver stars can look good.

Most of my cards are from my hand-made paper, either recycled or made from plant fibres (refer my article GR 79). However, even A4 sheets of plain or coloured bought paper folded into four, will do the job.

I do try to invent some sort of different creative idea each year. Usually some glint of an idea comes to me around September, then by October I've done one or two templates, so I can have a few ready for the earlier overseas mail.

Along with many other people, I sometimes think that Christmas was invented to give everyone an excuse to keep in touch, catch up on new addresses in our little black books, and warm ourselves in the knowledge that people care about us even if we are oceans apart. Perhaps form and content don't really matter, but only the thought, expressed in writing (not just a quick telephone call) and popped into an envelope and forwarded off at the right time to the right place. In my case, Christmas is a much cherished and precious family time.

Forget the expression 'the silly season'. Forget the mad insensitive pre-Christmas buying rush. Dwell on the *real* meaning of Christmas. Its message never ends.

RURAL YULE

Mucking out the milking yard, knee deep in fertiliser.

Gumboots balanced on an ever shrinking isthmus,

A thought occurs to me (now I'm older and wiser),

That herds of dairy cows don't care about Christmas.

All around Australia young children are a waking

To clamour for their presents while parents crawl from bed.

We emerged from ours before the Christmas dawn was breaking;

Shoved on our gumboots, milked one hundred and twenty head.

While the kids open their presents amidst paper and shrieks

I go murder the turkey, for Christmas dinner

As I pluck, I eye the pudding; it's been ageing for weeks.

The tucker must be good, I'm not getting any thinner.

The seasons' cards with snowmen on all curl up with the heat

And the cows won't mind if we have ourselves a beer.

With my belt let out another notch, a cold one's hard to beat

But I can hear the beggars mooing, evening milking must be near.

Heather Kozak

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SPIRIT OF MISADVENTURE

by Margaret Joel, Ultima, NSW.

The joys of country life are not for everyone. Margaret Joel humourously discovers that she is definitely a city person.

I raise the brim of my stiff new Akubra hat to mop the sweat from my brow as a solitary black cockatoo circles menacingly overhead. The service station behind me is deserted and my only link with the outside world is the rapidly receding Greyhound bus, now only a cloud of dust on the highway.

Inspired by reports that Queensland is the new California, I have just survived 25 hours on a bus in order to visit two friends who have recently made the move north. I now find myself and my luggage stranded in the main street of a town which appears to consist of a crossroads, one service station and an awful lot of bush.

The black cockatoo is starting to resemble a vulture and is eyeing me hungrily from above. However, help is at hand in the form of a cloud of dust and a heap of scrap metal that was once a ute. I am somewhat taken aback by the change in my friends, who are sporting the latest in dusty overalls, battered hat wear and unwashed feet. My own fashionable, if somewhat crumpled, city clothes are viewed with amusement as I climb into the cab, moving aside a collection of nameless, rusty objects to make room.

As we set off down the sixty kilometres of dirt track, swerving to avoid kangaroos, tourists and other pests, it occurs to me that not much happens here that doesn't result in a cloud of dust, and that maybe I needn't have polished my shoes when I departed my Brisbane hotel at dawn.

We drive through scrubland and turn off onto a bumpy loggers' track leading into the bush that is my friends' driveway. We skid to a halt and I get my first view of the house: it is a large wooden affair, standing on sixteen reinforced stilts to withstand the summer typhoons, which, I am informed, are only slightly less welcome than the tourists. The whole house looks like a do-it-yourself kit that has been put together in someone's backyard, thrown on the back of a truck and dumped here, I observe wittily. Only to be told that this is exactly what happened.

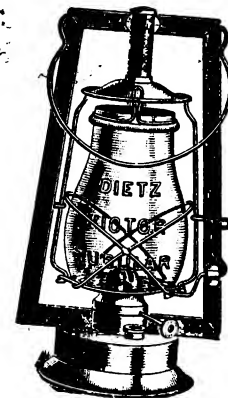
Silenced, I humbly follow my friend

up the wooden steps. ('We used to only have the ladder, but it got a bit slippery in the wet season, and anyway the dogs couldn't get up it.') Inside, the house is larger than it appears from the ground and I am pleasantly surprised by the level of luxury that has been achieved with a couple of tea chests and some strategically placed rugs. My host leads me through to the kitchen and I am suitably impressed by the state-of-the-art 1950's refrigerator, proudly running on kerosene, which has been installed in honour of my visit. The larder is stacked with enough tins of food to withstand a couple of nuclear winters and in the corner, the Dickensian stove emits a smoky belch as it is fed more logs.

'How charmingly rustic!' I exclaim, delightedly. 'And is this the bathroom?' I push aside the flapping plastic fly screen that leads, I assume, to another room. Instead, I find myself standing on a metre-square ledge, with nothing before me but a six-metre drop to the ground. This is when I learn that the bathroom has not, in fact, been built yet. Standing on the ledge, my host points to two sheets of corrugated metal, tied to a gum tree on the edge of the clearing, and it dawns on me suddenly that I am stuck here for a week.

Just as the enormity of my plight begins to sink in, I suddenly become aware that I am being observed – a large huntsman spider is viewing me dispassionately from its vantage point above the functionless sink. My host, whom I seem to recall has something of a spider phobia, smiles indulgently at it and explains that Jaws is a great mosquito repellent. I smile weakly and wonder silently if I am expected to rub him all over me every time I go outside.

The revelation of arriving at this bushland retreat is rapidly eclipsed by my increasing foreboding about the forthcoming night. Firstly, by the alarming realisation that as it becomes dark outside, it also becomes dark inside. The only light relief coming from a temperamental kerosene lamp. I eat my evening meal in blissful igno-



rance, complimenting my hostess on her culinary expertise and at the same time inquiring what it actually was I have just consumed.

Night-time entertainment in the bush, is, in itself, an experience. My host explains that in the absence of television, they have relearned the art of conversation and they launch into a detailed discourse on the state of the economy. Thrown into a confused panic, I can only stammer the occasional inanity and listen in amazed awe to their high speed critical analysis.

The battery-run wireless is humming softly in the background and as the news comes on we all fall instantly silent. For the next hour we take in the news, a talk show and a radio play. No one utters a sound and we stare blankly into space.

'You're lives are certainly much richer without the interference of television'. . . I begin, but am silenced by a glare from my host. Much later I am told what it was like in the dark months 'Before Radio'. In those days, bats flew right into the house, frogs mated in the guttering, and the entertainment consisted of watching the exploits of Sevenlegs, the spider and No-tail, the gecko, in their nightly prowling across the ceiling. This entertainment was abruptly and tragically cut short one fateful evening, however, when Sevenlegs was eaten by No-tail. And so the radio was bought.

'Oh what a shame!' I exclaim, sym-

pathetically, but my mind is elsewhere. I have crossed my legs all afternoon, in an eyewatering attempt to put off the inevitable excursion to the 'bathroom', but I can postpone it no longer. Armed with only a torch and whatever pioneering spirit I can muster, I climb down the steps and find myself alone for the first time in the wilderness. It is utterly black in every direction, except for the feeble beam of light from my torch. There are sounds all around me – anonymous wildlife flapping overhead, chirping and croaking at my feet and rustling ominously in the distance. I have a vision of a gigantic, salivating monitor lizard stomping out of the bush in search of a tasty city dweller to round off its evening meal. I whirl the torch all around me at every sound, but the thin beam is merely sucked up into the gloom, quite unable to penetrate it. Alarmed, I stumble into the dunny and go hurriedly about my business, observed expressionlessly by four Southern Cross spiders. I scurry back to the homestead, stepping on a cane toad that belches indignantly at me. Stumbling into the house, I bolt the door against the untamed outdoors and find my hosts staring at me in amazed silence. 'Did you see a snake?' they inquire, mildly. Snake! I hadn't even considered snakes! I smile weakly and decide not to mention my sudden fear of the dark.

As I wash that evening, from dam water that my host has thoughtfully brought up in a bucket, I recall her excited comments made earlier. They hope, within two years, to have electricity and their own running water supply. It occurs to me now that if the pioneering spirit means giving up something and then working your socks off for the next few years to get it back, well then frankly, I would rather remain a city dweller.

~~~~~

# ANOTHER MOUNTAIN TO CLIMB

by Jose Robinson, Wild Cattle Island, Qld.

We are not millionaires in monetary terms, but we are millionaires in the millions of bonuses we have experienced living on our freehold land on a small island just off the central Queensland coast. It is with very mixed feelings and lots of regrets that we have made the decision to put up for sale our island home of the past twenty years. No, it is not for health reasons; we're both in excellent health. No, it is not a marriage break-up; we're quite happy. Life has been wonderful on this Robinson Crusoe island.

We've mulled over and discussed this move long and thoroughly over the past months. Initially, it was Don who sowed the seed. At first I said No! No way did I want to move back into civilisation at our time of life. We've both always loved this gentle and free lifestyle. I just never imagined we'd ever move away from this wonderful seafront home of 20 years, where our dinner swims past the front door.

Our first 10 years of marriage back in the fifties were spent in New Guinea (also close to the sea). I loved the care-free life there. Five babies later, it was Don's suggestion we make the move back to Brisbane for our children's education. Reluctantly, I agreed to the move.

Three homes later, and with no offspring left at home, we found ourselves playing Robinson Crusoes on this idyllic island. It has been wonderfully rejuvenating for us. I always imagined we'd be here till we were carted off in a box. But it doesn't do to ever say never. Don had been feeling for quite some time that we should make a change before we were too old to do it. He felt we'd conquered all the hurdles, climbed all the mountains, met all the challenges here on The Island over the past 20 years and we should look for another mountain and different challenges.

Well put that way, I guess I've always been an enthusiast for exploring new horizons and looking for more stimulating achievements. I guess one doesn't want to stagnate, even if it is in

paradise.

Don dangled the carrot in front of my nose of a brand new house designed by us and a place with better soil and rainfall. He knows how much I love gardening, so that would be a plus; and a new house? Wow! Although I enjoy 'making' my own soil from seaweed and compost on this sand island and seeing my efforts come to fruition, perhaps it would be nice not to work so hard at it. I'm a bit of a workaholic and do drive myself because I enjoy it so much. I think Don worries that I may wear out before him. No sign of that yet.

The decision making process took some months and Don said, 'Let's go and have a look and see what is around, a bit away from civilisation.' So we looked at about 30 or so acreages in the hinterland of the Sunshine Coast north of Brisbane. We both fell in love with some acreage up a mountain with a dam, a waterfall after rain, some rainforest, a spectacular view and, most important, no neighbours in sight. I think it was the view that won us. Neither of us would want to live in suburbia, we've been away from that too long.

The stimulation of designing a permaculture garden from scratch appealed to me. I have recently received my Diploma in Permaculture, so the new property would be a whole new clean slate for me. The soil is volcanic with some clay and rainfall is excellent. I was won over! Another plus is we'll be closer to our daughter and two of our sons.

We've had an exciting and interesting life up to now, so let's see what stimulating and intriguing things are ahead for us. First we have to sell the house. I'll always be a 'grassroots' person and plan to continue writing about our new adventures. It may take some months to sell up; it's not everybody who wants to live on an island and play Robinson Crusoes. But we'll wait and see.

For more details about Jose and Don's lifestyle on Wild Cattle Island, see GRs 96 and 127.

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# REDUCE YOUR BUSHFIRE RISK

by Graeme Hind, Community Fireguard Facilitator Westernport Area, & Steve Pascoe, Community Fireguard Facilitator, Yarra Area.

Many people believe that gardens can actually create a risk to their house in a bushfire. While this can be the case on some properties, thoughtful planning, planting and maintenance of gardens can reduce the threat and indeed offer significant protection.

The threat to your house during a bushfire will be from radiant heat, direct flame contact and wind-borne embers. The latter being by far the greatest threat. Using appropriate plants and landscaping will allow you to enjoy a beautiful garden without compromising your bushfire safety.

## PLANT TYPE & LOCATION

During bushfires the amount, type, arrangement and fuel moisture content of vegetation are the foremost factors which will impact on the fire intensity and subsequent survival rating of your home. An assessment of the fire tolerance of the trees and plants around your home is an important issue and the development of a planting programme is a major safety and survival strategy.

If correctly positioned, fire retardant plants and trees can absorb more heat, trap burning embers and sparks, and minimise or eliminate direct flame contact, while also reducing wind speeds around the home and outbuildings. All plants will burn, given the right conditions. However, plants with a low moisture content, fine leaves and branches, and high oil content will generally be more combustible and present a higher risk if situated immediately around your house (within ten metres).

Plants with high moisture content, broad leaves and few volatile oils, such as many European and some native species, can actually provide protection to your house during a bushfire. Trees are generally not a risk providing that vegetation is kept to a minimum beneath them. In fact, if we examine the photo of fire damaged trees more closely, it demonstrates that the skeleton of the trees remain, while bark, leaves and twigs (all fine fuels less than six millimetres in diameter) are burnt.

The secret to planting trees is to choose those that will retard the passage of the

fire and have very little ember production when alight. Some examples are oaks, elms, rhododendrons, photinias and camellias. In choosing fire retardant plants other considerations such as aesthetic appeal, growth rate, resistance to drought and frost, and compatibility with your local environment are important, as well as their ability to regenerate following damage from fire.

The location and distribution of plants within the garden is important. The more combustible plants should be located away from the house. Lawns or paths could be used to develop breaks between garden beds and the house.

The lessons we can learn from this are that the removal of all the fine fuels from the ground, the eradication of woody weeds, and the modification of the tree species around the home are critical factors in personal and property survival.

## LANDSCAPING

Features such as garden walls, terraces and hedges can affect the spread of a fire by reducing wind, trapping embers and



protecting assets from radiant heat. Using areas such as driveways, vegetable gardens, and other low fuel areas on the side that you expect a bushfire to approach, will greatly modify the fire behaviour. Watering your garden will maintain the moisture content of the plants. It will also maintain soil and leaf litter moisture which will help to reduce the severity of any fire.

## MULCH

It is well recognised that mulch is a great benefit to gardens, retaining moisture, replacing nutrients and suppressing weeds. Many mulches are combustible and, if ignited, may carry a fire to your house. Keeping mulch moist and separated from combustible building surfaces will minimise this risk while allowing the benefits of mulching. Gravel or pebble mulches provide an alternative for gardens abutting timber posts or walls.

## MANAGED RISK

It is generally quite easy to develop and manage a garden that will reduce your risk from bushfires. Sensible gardening will not only reduce the risk to your house, but will also make it safer for you to defend your house if this is part of your bushfire survival plan.

CFA Westernport Area has developed area-specific lists in conjunction with municipal fire prevention officers, conservation officers and conservation groups. These lists include the more fire-tolerant trees, shrubs and ground covers suitable for areas such as Bass Coast and Phillip Island, Mornington Peninsula and the bushland areas north of the Princes Highway in the shires of Casey and Cardinia. Copies of these lists, or further information can be obtained from Graeme Hind, Community Fireguard Facilitator, Westernport Area, ph: 03-9793-4088. The lists are also relevant to both other areas of Victoria and to similar areas in other states.

## A YULE LOG?

The Yule log is the biggest log that can fit in the fireplace and is hauled in on Christmas Eve and lit with a piece of the log from the year before. The log is meant to burn throughout Christmas to symbolise peace and prosperity for the coming year.



# HERBAL ARTHRITIS RELIEF

by Albert Sluik, Gunderdin, WA.

I would like to share with readers a herbal remedy for arthritis.

- 25 parts aloe vera
- 10 parts lemon balm leaves
- 6 parts horseradish leaves
- 1 part thyme leaves
- 2 parts garlic cloves

All herbs must be fresh and not preserved.

Mash herbs in a pestle and mortar and apply directly to the affected areas. Allow to dry naturally. Repeat six times per day (minimum). When inflammation has cleared, continue for another seven days, then go on to the second recipe.

Any variety of aloe or thyme will do if the common ones are unavailable. Don't add other herbs or water. Make fresh daily. It is the fresh sap from the herbs that counts not the leftover leaf material. Use a blender sparingly if need be. There is latitude in the quantities (a little) so don't stress out if there is difficulty in the exact measure.

Measurements are by weight, or by chopping herbs to tea leaf size and lightly firming in a measure.



When the above recipe has been used as directed, take:

33 parts sweet potato tuber (yellow/orange varieties)

7 parts willow bark (any variety of salix)

4 parts thyme leaves

4 parts lemon balm leaves

3 parts tansy leaves

Mash herbs as per previous recipe and apply three times per day for as long as needed. Gently exercise joints to get back movement. Use fresh herbs only. The first recipe works upon the infection, the second is for rehabilitation of the damaged joints etc.

Feedback/questions can be sent to me, especially about arthritis in children: Albert Sluik, PO Box 22, Gunderdin 6407.



## NOT-SO-MILD CIGARETTES

Many people who smoke cigarettes labeled 'ultra mild' or 'super mild' believe they are less harmful than regular cigarettes. However smokers inhale just as much tar into their lungs

and they may actually be inhaling additional toxic substances. Despite government demands, tobacco companies still refuse to disclose information about the additives in their products.



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from a flower"*

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# SANITY SAVERS

## ENTERTAINING AND ENJOYING PRESCHOOLERS

by Liz Zylinski, Newham, Vic.

A couple of years back, we, the Zylinski family (Liz, Andrew, Simeon and Iona), spent six months living in Germany. This was an interesting and fun experience, but also a challenge, particularly for me, as there was no playgroup, kindergym or friends to break up the days. Plus, below zero temperatures tended to keep us indoors. Having survived and actually enjoyed the experience, I thought I'd share some of our activities with you. Mostly we used normal household resources (including paint, paper, glue, pens/crayons and scissors) so our activities were pretty cheap.

If you have little people in your household, or as regular visitors, I thoroughly recommend the Nursing Mothers' Association book, *Fun and Games Activities for 2-6 year olds* (Clare Renner and Meredith Costain, \$15.95 from NMAA and mail order). This book has hundreds of ideas for indoor and outdoor games, crafts, decorations, music, travelling – even a chapter called 'Sanity Savers'. On several occasions, this book saved mine!

In particular, it was Simeon who needed stimulation because of being away from playgroup and kindergarten. So, during the two to three hours Iona spent in bed each afternoon Simeon and I would work and play together.

### MAKING THINGS

With paper, card, scissors and glue, we made all sorts of objects.

#### Mosaic Pictures

These are fun to make. First, tear different coloured papers into fingernail-size pieces. Now either draw an outline, using a page from a colouring book, or just go abstract. Glue on the paper, making a mosaic. We made some lovely pictures this way.

#### Layered Pictures

Take a simple picture from a colouring book, such as a dog. Cut a piece of paper the size of the whole dog. Cut out other colours for legs, ears, eyes, paws. Glue together, layering up from biggest to smallest.

### Egg Carton Creatures

**Crocodiles:** Paint an egg carton green, and cut the bottom off. Glue on patty cases for eyes. Attach bottom to top with a pipe cleaner at the back, to make a snappy mouth. Add more cartons, joining with pipe cleaners, to make as long a crocodile as you want!

**Pigs:** Cut out and paint a cup from the carton pink and attach two pipe cleaners underneath as legs. Draw on a snout and eyes and attach a curly pipe cleaner for a tail. A shoe box makes a good sty – you could make a whole family of pigs.

**Spiders:** Cut out individual cups and paint black. Attach four pipe cleaners underneath for legs. Draw or stick on eyes (wiggly ones are fun!). Attach a thread through the top and stick to the ceiling to give Dad a fright when he gets home!

#### Pipe Cleaners

These have lots of uses. They can be legs and tails for creatures, or twist two together for a butterfly, or an apple, or a bumble bee. Great for travelling too.

#### Masks

Karnival is a huge festival in Germany. Religiously based, it is a little like a huge Moomba, with parties and

parades everywhere. Masks and costumes are very important, so we got into the mood and made our own masks, which we sticky-taped to wooden spoons. Then we played dress-ups!

### READING, PAINTING, COLOURING

These occupied all of us for hours. If you can't stand the mess of brush painting, try roll-on painting. Collect empty deodorant roll-ons. If they don't unscrew, carefully ease the ball out with a knife. Fill with paint and replace the ball. Great for messy littlies, such as two-year-olds who think they're four!

Colouring books are inexpensive, and brilliant if you're travelling. Both children have their own pencil case and will colour quietly in the car, when visiting friends, or in restaurants. This way we managed adult conversations in peace!

#### Learning About Words and Numbers

This is one of Simeon's passions. Letter and number cards are fun. Mark up two differently coloured pieces of card into squares about five centimetres across (or whatever fits neatly). Cut these out. On one colour



neatly write a letter onto each square – capital on one side, lower case on the other. Make multiples of the vowels, as well as common letters such as s, r, t, n, m, d, and of your child's name. With the letter cards, you can learn the alphabet together, learn to spell names, learn to write by copying letters and words, make up sets of rhyming words, make up sentences.

On the other coloured squares, write each of the numbers 0 to 9 onto about half the cards – so you have several sets. On the others, draw large dots for each of the numbers 1 to 9. Now you can have fun learning to count together. Put dots into order. Put numbers in order. Match dots to numbers. Make numbers by putting cards together. Help to write numbers. Talk about adding and subtracting – perhaps later make up +, -, x, and = cards.

#### Letters

Simeon and Iona also enjoyed doing drawings to send to grandparents and friends back home. For Simeon, this became quite a flow of letters and art across the world. He even chose post-cards and dictated letters to me for his friends to help keep in touch. You and

your children needn't be overseas to send letters – it's always a thrill to receive mail, even when the sender lives next door!

#### SCRAPBOOKS AND ALBUMS

Another way to stay in touch, and keep in touch, is a photograph album, or a scrapbook. We took an album of photos of home, animals, family and friends. This was looked through almost daily and particularly helped Iona remember what we'd left behind. Kept up to date, it is also a useful ice-breaker between the children and their grandparents when they haven't seen them for some time – the children will eagerly describe what they've been doing.

#### GROWING WITHOUT A GARDEN

As it was winter, and we were in a third-floor apartment, we missed the joy of growing things. So we grew vegetable sprouts instead.

#### Carrot Sprouts

When you cut the end off a carrot, sit it cut-side down onto a saucer filled with cotton wool. Keep in a warm sunny place and water daily. Soon it will sprout into a fern-like plant. Try this

with turnips, swedes, parsnips, etc.

#### Potato Sprouts

Take a potato that has started to sprout and stick toothpicks into it so it will sit comfortably in a glass. Fill the glass with enough water to just cover the potato's bottom. Put on a sunny bench and wait a few days. Roots will appear below water and sprouts will form small leaves above.

Next issue we look at more sanity savers for preschoolers and parents, including cooking and some great fun energy burning activities.



Working with  
people

to create low  
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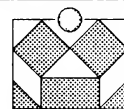
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# MAKE YOUR OWN SAUSAGES

## PART II

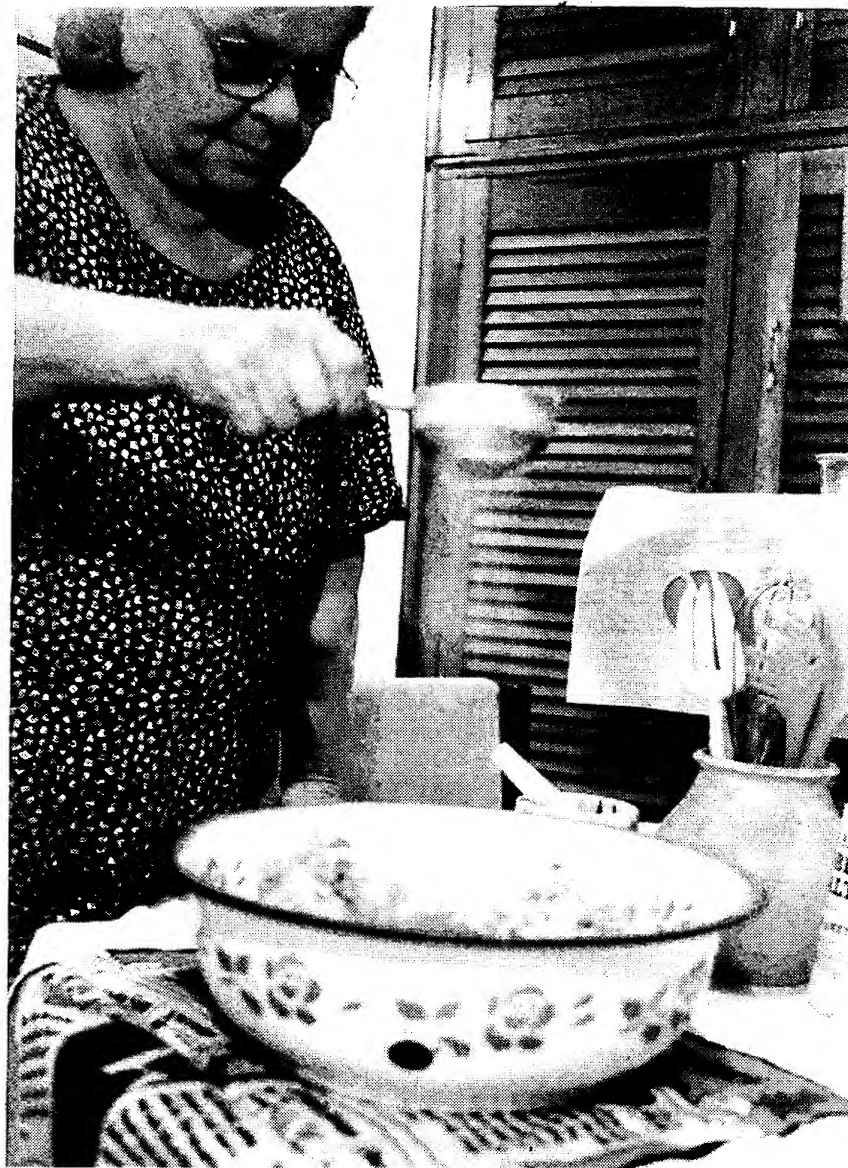
by Lucy Daugalis, Daw Park, SA.

It is usually thought that the processes of life stop once an animal has been slaughtered. In reality, these are changed into others, which are similar to the processes of a live organism. As in a human body, the animal body has vitamins, hormones and ferments. Vitamins have been extensively researched; about the others we know only that there are very small amounts of them, but that their active processes are deciding factors. Consequently, similar processes occur also in sausages. They are active until the sausage has been consumed as food. Therefore, it is evident that when sausages are made for longer keeping, it is not only important to choose the right kind of meat, but one must also keep in mind other circumstances which create favourable conditions for the later useful changes in the maturing of the sausage.

During the maturing of the sausage, some food enzymes, or compounds, unite and create new ones. This change can be noticed in the colour of the sausage, which turns from red to a greyish-pink, and later again to red.

The colour of the meat depends on the haemoglobin present in it, which changes during the maturation of the sausage until it becomes united in a stable red colour. In order to hasten this process, a little chemically pure saltpetre is added, which, of itself, is not active in the changes occurring in the muscle colouring matter, but only hastens them. When a larger amount is added, saltpetre is an active muscle colour-changing participant, which, from red, goes over into pale green or grey. The nitrate which breaks off the saltpetre is very poisonous; therefore, when preparing meat products, one must use only a very small amount of saltpetre: for one kilogram of meat, no more than half a gram of pure, without any admixtures, saltpetre.

Fermentation has a great influence upon the above-mentioned changes which proceed very slowly. The activity of ferments depends on temperature: higher temperatures promote fermentation, lower ones slow it down. The ideal



Salt and spices added to the sausage mixture must be very fine and dry to ensure even distribution. Store spices carefully to retain taste and aroma.

temperature for the maturing of sausage is two degrees Celcius. When the temperature is unsuitable, the activity of ferments slows down or stops altogether. The activity of ferments is also lessened when there is too much salt in the meat.

The maturing of sausages is benefited by the addition of a small amount of sugar. For this purpose, the best sugar is from sugar cane. To one kilogram meat,

two to three grams of sugar is added. A greater amount of sugar, on the contrary, can harm the sausages by souring them.

### ADDITIVES

Salt for the meat prepared for sausages must be completely clean, fine and dry. The more additives there are, the more chances there are to contaminate the meat, for some bacteria which can be harmful to

the meat can remain in the salt. Very dirty salt can contaminate and spoil the meat. This is very important when making meat products for longer keeping.

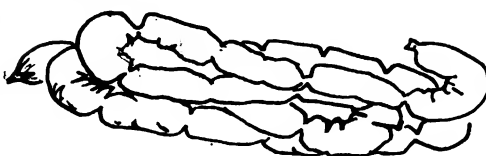
For sausage, it is better to use fine salt, because such is distributed in the meat faster and more evenly. It is used in proportion of 3 percent to 3.5 percent of the weight of the meat (one kilogram meat, 30 – 40 grams salt). Too much will make the sausage of poorest quality – it harms taste and appearance. On the surface of cut oversalted sausage (after leaving it open) the salt separates from the meat, making it cloudy white.

The sausage maker who thinks that only the salt will protect the sausage from spoiling is wrong. The reasons for the spoiling of sausage are various and an overabundance of salt will not prevent it by any means. The amount of salt added for long-keeping sausage must be to improve taste, but no less than 3 percent (one kilogram meat, 30 grams salt).

The quality of sausage also depends greatly upon the choice of herbs or spices. In order to have a variety of tasty sausages, pepper, as many are used to adding in sausages, is not sufficient. It is also important that one spice doesn't

overwhelm the others. All together must create a pleasant aroma.

For sausage of which the greater part of spices consists of pepper, white pepper should be used. The aroma of the two peppers is quite different. This is because white pepper is from the ripe, shelled pepper, while the black is unripe, dried, with shell. The white has a more mild aroma than the black, which has, in its dried shell, a sharp tasting ingredient (pippirin). Besides pepper, coriander, cardamom and garlic are used in sausages. When making sausage for a shorter keeping time (for boiling or frying), black pepper is used along with other sharper spices.



When buying ground spices for sausage, one has to make sure that there are no additives in them. This is all the more important if used for long-keeping sausage.

The spices for the sausage must be ground very fine, so that they are easier to distribute evenly, making them more effective. Pepper, even though sifted a few times and seemingly very fine, still sometimes exhibits coarser bits. Properly

ground spices, when sprinkled over sausage meat, should not be visible. Ground spices which are not used immediately should be stored dry, in tightly closed jars (preferably glass). Left loose, they lose their aroma. Carefully prepared sausage spices not only improve the taste, but also influence the later active changes in the sausage.

Next time: making the casings and the actual sausages.

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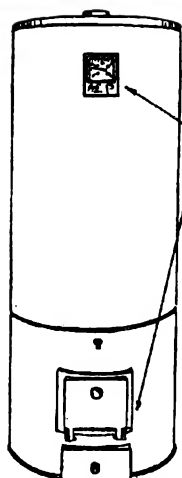
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# HOUSE MINDING

by Robyn Eades, Naracoopa, King Is.

Another summer is nearly over again and I've returned home from another house minding 'holiday'. It's something I just fell into some years ago when friends needed someone to feed their goats while they went away. There were dogs, guinea pigs, chooks and a budgie as well, so they suggested I pack up my children and stay in their house for the duration. Some holiday! I still shudder when I think of all the things which would not work for me in the same 'easy' way they did for their owners.

First, there was the new Russian tractor: it had so many gears and hydraulic thingameys to play with. Then there was the silage: what a pong! Digging it out of the pit was only the start of the problems. Getting it across the bumpy paddock without dropping big lumps of it was the next. Opening the gates without having all the animals run out or running over them was another. I soon realised that they came back for the food, but some did get it dumped on their heads. They all lived to clamour for more the next day.

Then there was the generator. I'm not sure I could start to describe coping with this – I'm not sure I really did. I live with wind and solar power expressly to avoid the joys of the diesel monster and I can't think why my friends thought I'd be able to master it. They put it in a hut over near the wood shed so the noise wouldn't disturb the household, but I found not hearing it was worse. One night the rain beat hard on the roof and the lights began to flicker – was it still going? – perhaps it had just run low on fuel. I had to dash out and switch it off anyway (the automatic switch did not work just then.) So I fumbled at the gate in the wet, two sopping Irish Setters helping, splashed through puddles and investigated by torchlight. I couldn't tell

if anything was wrong and probably couldn't have done a thing to fix it if there was! It was easier some nights to have candles and go to bed early. They did eventually go solar.

My children were at school in Currie then – a half-hour drive, but the school bus came to a corner 'only' a quarter of an hour away. There were only two gates and the gravel road to traverse, and only once did the bus come at the appointed time, so twice a day there was at least an hour's disturbance and the agony of wondering if we were late or it was, or had something even worse happened? I'm sure we declared a few unofficial holidays and was not surprised that my friends opted for home schooling soon after this.



The view from Robyn Eades cabin at Naracoopa, her base for house-sitting adventures.

Then there were the gates! One person (at that time just recovering from the first of many sciatica attacks) in a car has an almost impossible task when faced with farm gates that must be opened and closed every time. Sociable horses, affectionate dogs, curious cows, hungry sheep and goats, and the rain, just add to the difficulties. And if the gates themselves weren't a problem – double ones that always swing out of reach, or the dreaded wire and dropper 'panel', then the fastenings would be of such personally intricate design that special positioning (of the mouth mostly) would be required. Not to mention slack, greasy ropes tied in knots to make Baden Powell turn in his grave.

The wood stoves should have been simple, but the trusty old Everhot never was, and the heater would do nothing else. My stories must have convinced them it was no joke and they installed a wonderful Rayburn in time. The wood stack must have been well stocked that time, but I've known sometimes when this detail has been woefully neglected.

Now we get to the cow. Betty had to be milked only once a day, as her calf still needed its share of her produce. 'She is really friendly – typical Jersey, just likes to move about a bit,' was my instruction. We moved to every corner of that paddock and my desire for milk in my coffee waned considerably. Several calves later, and a couple of attacks of black mastitis, Betty still gives milk and cream with the same degree of affability I'm told.

Those friends never did believe just how difficult I found the task of minding their place, but I found it hard to refuse subsequent offers and, as I've mentioned, some things did improve, or at least change. Now they have left the Island altogether I sort of miss the

adventures I had there.

After that, my reputation was set and I was in some demand, mostly in school holiday time, but I've become choosy with experience. Luckily, there aren't many generators now, but being hooked into the 'hydro' can be a worry too. Having to reset all the clocks and timers that stop or flash when there is a surge or blackout is a chore, and if there is no other power source you just have to sit and wait. But my pet hate is all the noises things make as they switch on and off: nearly as bad are fish tank bubblers and windchimes.

It seems I have found a lot things to complain about, but I try to live simply and possibly my friends thought they were offering some respite from my frugal Naracoope existence in my tiny, self-built cottage with 'only' solar power, tank water and not even a kitchen sink!

Every home, water system or wood shed is a reflection of the person who owns it, but the assumptions of youth and health can cause major hazards. I have a friend in a wheelchair who could not visit some places at all and my own crook bones objected to many artistic or special features. I've learned to adjust to all sorts of uncomfortable chairs and beds and dif-

ferent table and bench heights. I can cope with a myriad of curtain and blind designs and I have discovered how to operate lots of appliances such as microwave ovens, push-button phones, answering machines, videos and a variety of wood, gas or electric heaters. This summer I even tried a breadmaker. I'm trying to use the experiences positively in my new house.

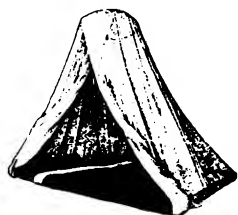
The real reason I'm required is of course to mind animals rather than houses. I've never had a dog of my own and my cat is fairly aloof, but borrowing a few four-footed friends every now and then is okay. My charges have ranged from a bear-like but very sooky Newfoundland to tiny but aggressive terriers. As well, there have been axolotls, worms, pigs and emus. Once they know I'm there to feed them some sort of relationship is quickly established. Long rambles in new paddocks and down fresh tracks keep us all fit, even if electric fences and strange cows or wallaby chases happen along the way. This sheep farmer's daughter has found beef cattle looking for their calves, or more feed, a little threatening, but going around the mob counting new arrivals is very pleasant.

I have flexible arrangements as to pay

and conditions, so that some people pay me and others barter in some way or another. It's fun to find yummy things baked especially for me, or notes of explanation in odd places. I try to feel like I'm having a holiday and sometimes I get things done that I never get around to at home. The most recent time I knitted some of my handspun wool. One time I sorted out a suitcase of letters my grandmother had kept, from her children from the time they went to boarding school to when my father went to war. I can read and watch videos with impunity too!

One thing I've found is that some of the cares and worries of home melt away in dealing with all the new and different conditions. I get nostalgic yearnings and have renewed appreciation of home when I get back to it, for a little while at least. Some readers might remember that I have had to sell up to a sand mining company and build a new house recently, but the venture is in great doubt at present and I have not had to move yet, even though I have a big new 'proper' house waiting. I had thought of using my house and pet sitting references to do some travelling, but right now I'm staying put and trying to appreciate every moment of reprieve.

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# COWS WILL BE COWS

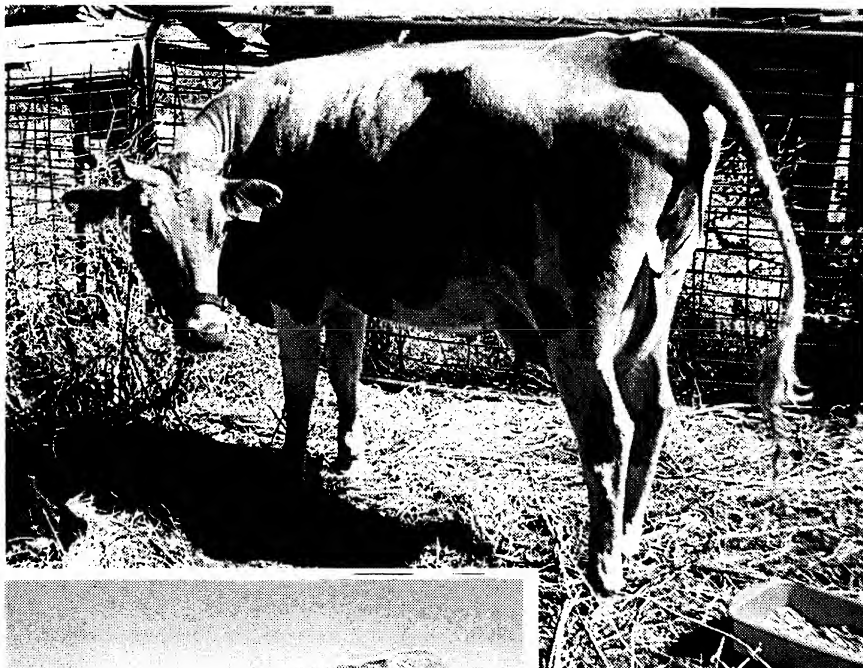
by Anna Stone, Finley, NSW.

Those of you with cows of your own will know only too well what individualistic personalities they can have. Well take it from me, my Guernseys are no different.

Elle was my first, bought at the local calf sale. My first inkling of the trouble I was in for came about 30 seconds after the auctioneer knocked her down to me. I literally caught her in my arms as she tried to jump out of her pen. My first thought then was: 'Oh brother, what have I gotten myself into now'. It wasn't that bad.

Jackie was next. She was bought from a dairy farmer near Maitland at eight months of age. Oranges were her thing; she took great delight in crushing them in her mouth so that I became covered in a mixture of juice and drool. I'm positive I could hear her sniggering away. There is also the matter of her escape. Somehow Jackie learnt how to jemmy the gate latch. The first I knew of this was one afternoon when I heard the thundering of hooves in the backyard. What a sight when I got outside! First came my sister's terrier, closely followed by my pet lamb. In the rear came Jackie, galloping after them, chasing the two all over the backyard. I managed to get the poor dog and lamb to safety, as my lunatic cow kept racing around, putting great holes in the lawn.

In time, Elle had had her first calf and was ready for remating (by artificial insemination). She was locked in the yard in the morning (away from her calf) so that she could be done



Above: Elle soon after giving birth to her first calf.



Left: Mikki, escape artist and starter of dog fights, enjoys her food. Even so, it didn't help when it came to getting her to take some bloat oil.

that afternoon. The farmers around had a good laugh as I think Elle was the first cow they'd seen vertically climb a two-metre fence to get back to her calf. And without a single scratch!

I have now added Mikki to my small but growing herd. She is just as bad as the others, if not worse. How many cows can start a dog fight and come out smelling of azaleas (literally)? She learnt that by leaning her neck hard enough on the wire fence, she could reach her front legs on to the rabbit cage on the other side, and so heave her way out of the paddock. Not so long ago, Mikki became bloated and I had to put a bottle of bloat oil down her throat. The following day, I thought I'd be clever and put some bloat oil in her feed. Well, if she could have stuck her hoof down her throat she would have. As it was, one sniff was enough to make her

stick her tongue out as far as possible and make gagging noises.

Of course, they all share the bad habit of automatically knowing when you're hot and bothered or just plain in a hurry. That is when they stand on your foot and just laugh at you, and all the yelling and cursing in the world won't shift them. If you happen to be in a really bad mood, the silly cow will put all her weight on the one hoof that's standing on your foot. But as soon as someone comes to your aid, she will automatically move so that your helper can't see what all the fuss was for.

Cows aren't all that bad though. Mine are also very sweet, friendly, and always happy to share a Weetbix or two. Despite the trouble they sometimes give me, my gang of cows is a great source of amusement. I wouldn't swap them for anything in the world.

# MARVELLOUS MULCH

by Alan Stewart, Alexandra Hills, Qld.

Gardening experts inform us we can't have too much mulch, especially during the long summer months in Australia when the temperature can quickly dry out the soil. Mulch is invaluable for saving water, and therefore money, since in many areas water now has to be paid for. Mulch is available in garden centres, supermarkets etc, but this requires a transfer of money. For conservationists like me a viable alternative was needed.

The problem was easily solved where I live because the commonest trees are the various species of palm. In fact, we are completely surrounded by them. Almost every house in the street, not to mention the suburb, shire, state, has them in gardens, parks, streetscapes.

Palms make a first-class mulch. They constantly shed branches, most, if not all, of which are dumped either in garbage bins or nearby bushland. I collect them from both areas. The fronds are easily stripped down, leaving the stems and outer casing. We don't have a

mulching machine, considering them an unnecessary expense. A good quality pair of secateurs will do the job, although somewhat more slowly.

The branches are most easily dealt with when fairly green, as the dried off outer casing is very tough. I snip the end of the casing into strips, then cut them into squares straight onto the garden beds. The resulting mulch is tough, long lasting, freely available and, of course, costs nothing, apart from a little work. The constant addition of mulch over the years has turned our grey, sandy impoverished soil into one full of humus, worms and other soil organisms, improving the fertility markedly.

Readers who live where palms are common, please take advantage of them. Most don't want the fallen branches, much preferring to be rid of them.

As an item of interest, the fronds from the cabbage tree palm were used to make hats for both sexes during the last century. Judging from pictures of the time,



they were stylish, fashionable and popular. No reason why they shouldn't be once again, as fashion always goes around in circles. If any readers are milliners or hat makers, there is a little verse they may find amusing:

'The most expensive kind of clothes will not disguise a too long nose,  
The proper way to deal with that,  
Is to cleverly get a hat, that has its  
feathers, brims or bows extending to  
the line of nose,  
Thus perfect balance is achieved,  
friends gratified and foes deceived.'

The verse was, apparently, an advertisement for a milliner on buses in the 1930s around the north of England.

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# REFRESHING SUMMER DRINKS

by Claire Hardman, Foster North, Vic.

Tom and I live on the hill country north of Wilsons Promontory at a place called Foster North in Victoria. We run Cheviot and Perendale sheep and the occasional steer or cow. Regenerated native forest, clear springs, platypus, koalas, laced monitors and spectacular views all form part of our daily lives.

Like most farmers we're busy all year round with everything from lambing through to planting native flora. But late spring through summer is the beer, wine and ginger beer season. Tom makes his own ale, lager and stout; some from kits and some from scratch. I am in charge of the ginger beer, wines, liqueurs and sherries. This may sound like we are pickled most of the time but in fact these home-made goodies make for wonderful gifts which are prized by our friends. There is nothing like 'homemade' to get the taste buds tingling.

The 'Annual Great Southern Show', held at Foster each year on the last Saturday in February has now included a section on beer, wines (other than grape based), sparkling wines and ginger beer. People are becoming more and more interested in the production of home-brewed drinks as they have no artificial or preservative additives. Anyhow, I know how difficult getting proven recipes can be so I have set out two below which work well.

## GINGER BEER

We make lots of ginger beer each year and it's the one with the sultanas. A word of warning though, this recipe does result in an alcohol content in the end product. This is usually extremely low (less than ½ percent) but it is there nonetheless. In fact, it is so low that it isn't a problem for children or teetotallers. The catch is, never divide the plant more than five times.

Sultanas have a natural yeast on them which acts with the sugar to produce alcohol. So don't use more raisins than indicated in the recipe and never increase the sugar content. If you want a stronger ginger taste, always reduce the water by a few cups just prior to bottling.



## Plant

In a jar with a lid place:

- 8 sultanas
- juice of 2 lemons
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tbsp ground ginger
- 2 cups cold water

Stir well. Sit the lid on the top of the jar to keep out bugs, dust, etc. Place in a warm location and leave for two to three days or until the mix has started to ferment. It is fermenting when there is bubble on the top, and eventually a thick 'sludge' as well. This sludge is the plant. When fermentation has started, each day for seven days feed your plant with:

- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 4 tsp sugar

## Making Up

In a clean plastic bucket place:

- 4 cups sugar
- 4 cups boiling water
- juice of 4 lemons

Strain plant into the syrup through a fine cloth and squeeze dry. Add 28 cups of cold water. Bottle and seal. We use PET bottles, you know, the plastic ones that soft drinks come in these days. Leave to mature in the bottle a couple of weeks before drinking, although you can drink it right away if you like it without fizz. Remember to release the pressure in the bottles, particularly on hot days, or they will explode.

## To Keep Your Plant Alive

Divide the plant left in the cloth in half. Place this half back in the jar. Add two cups of cold water, new sultanas and a cup of sugar. Wait until fermentation begins again and then start feeding your plant as before.

## SPARKLING RHUBARB WINE

Before beginning to make this, or any wine, make sure that everything is very clean. You can use a solution of laundry bleach and water to sterilise everything, but just make sure that you wash it out thoroughly with clean water.

## Ingredients

- 750 g sugar
- 1 kg rhubarb
- 1½ tbsp white vinegar
- 4.5 lt water
- 2 lemons

Wash and cut rhubarb into small pieces and place in a container with the juice and rind (no pith) of the lemons. Add remaining ingredients and stand for 48 hours. Strain three times. Bottle: we use PET bottles but you can use anything you have on hand. Remember that after a few days pressure will build up in the bottles so it's best to release this every few days just to be safe. Even PET bottles will blow up if you don't keep an eye on them. Leave for two weeks before using. Serve well chilled in champagne glasses. If you don't like stewed rhubarb don't worry, this tastes nothing like it.

## FRESH FIRST AID

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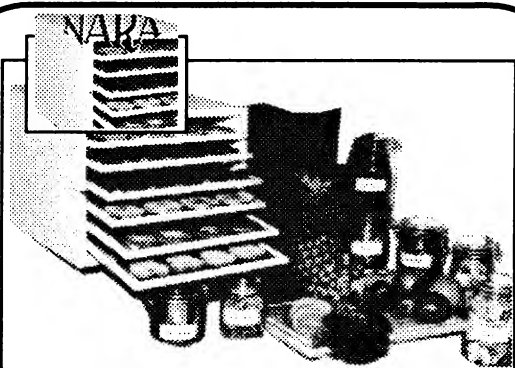
# EFFORTLESS WATER TANK REPAIR

Nowhere in the heritage literature can I find this solution. So now, to overcome the agonies of leaking water tank holes from pin size to thumb size, this easy quick repair I discovered has doubled tank life, at least until all holes join together. The trick is to enlarge the hole, if small, to pencil size; or if bigger, until rusty edges are smoothed back to good metal, meantime enjoying a cooling squirt on some hot day. Now

plug the hole with somebody's thumb until you can poke a plastic shopping bag into the hole using the rounded end of a long pencil (if not a thin broom handle); withdrawing each time to thrust ever more bag in until about half is still outside. Then withdraw said pencil and wait till drops nearly stop next day. If no, continue thrusting more bag in. Sometimes it pays to leave the poker in. Ingeniously, what happens is

that water pressure gathers up said bag and reverse thrusts it against the hole from inside. Bags don't seem to biodegrade in water, enabling ours to stay intact for years leaking barely a drop – if any! Without emptying any water, a slow-weeping tank hole can be cured by dropping in some handfuls of cement or diatomaceous fine filter powder and stirring.

Dr Pat ffyske Howden



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# PATCHWORK DECORATIONS FOR CHRISTMAS

by Pam Odijk, Bribie Island, Qld.

Photographs by Herman Odijk.

If you are looking for a personal Christmas gift with a difference, one which is easily posted, and one which anyone, regardless of their age, would be happy to receive, then consider some Christmas decorations. These make ideal presents for overseas friends (especially if you decide on an Australiana design), for an elderly person, someone in hospital or a nursinghome, for a student or child. If you want to make a little extra money, make and sell them on a market stall.

My decorations in the photographs won prizes for me in their category in a craft show.

To make the decorations, you need three skills: elementary embroidery – stem stitch (for the lettering) – basic patchwork including Seminole patchwork (for the stocking and Orana wall hanging), basic machine sewing and quilting skills. See GR 129 for Seminole patchwork instructions.

## HAPPY HOGMANAY DOOR WREATH

Those with Scottish connections know that Hogmanay means New Year's Eve, or can refer to the celebrations held on this occasion, so it adds a nice Scottish touch to include it in our Australian festive season. Or make a decoration as a gift for a Scottish friend. They'll love it.

### Materials For Wreath

18 tartan squares, 2.75 cm

8 green squares

5 black squares

8 red squares

Or, squares to complement the colours in the tartan material you have chosen. (The squares in the wreath in the photograph were made from fleecy off-cuts.)

Material (cotton/polyester preferred) for the centre plaque, this is embroidered with 'Season's Greetings and Happy Hogmanay' (or whatever you like), approximately 25 x 15 cm, but measure across the completed plaited wreath to determine the actual size of this plaque for your own wreath.



A lovely gift for anyone with Scottish ancestry, or change the message to suit the recipient.

Tartan stripping 5 cm wide for surrounding the plaque.

Material for backing the plaque and its surrounds.

Material for bow, 2 lengths of 5 cm wide stripping joined together and turned right side out, sufficient to make a bow and a binding strip.

Small amount of quilting padding for the plaque

Strips of quilting padding, polyester material, or old pantyhose for padding the plaited 'sausages' which make the wreath.

Wire for inserting inside the 'sausages' of the wreath prior to plaiting to ensure that the wreath maintains its shape.

Curtain ring to attach to back of finished wreath to enable it to be hung on the door, mantelpiece, or wall.

Small amount of embroidery thread or cotton

## PROCEDURE

### The Wreath Itself

Sew the tartan squares into three strips alternating plain squares with tartan squares, making each strip 13 squares long (or longer if you wish).

With right sides together, sew each strip into a 'sausage' shape enclosing one end. Turn right side out

Pad each sausage strip. The easiest way to do this is to thread long strips of

padding (joined quilt padding offcuts, lengths of polyester material, old pantyhose joined together etc) to the top of each sausage using a nappy pin or safety pin. Then open the nappy pin and manoeuvre it back down the sausage without disturbing the padding. Catch the filling through each sausage with a safety pin at the top on the outside.

Cut three strands of (copper or other) wire, slightly shorter than each sausage. Make a loop at each end with pliers and twist each loop firmly.

Thread the wire through each sausage, catching the loops of the wire through the material at the top with a safety pin.

Turn hems in enclosing the bottom wire loop in each sausage and top-sew by hand.

Plait the wreath and bend into shape.

Catch all the wire loops being held with a safety pin, through the ends, and with a needle and strong thread securely sew through the loops, remove the safety pins. Then sew the top ends of the wreath firmly together. (These stitches will eventually be covered by the binding and ribbon bow.)

### The Greetings Block

Measure across the wreath to determine the exact size of the embroidered block needed for your wreath. Remember that the plaque will also have a tartan border around it when finished.

Cut the material for the plaque, approximately 25.5 cm x 15.3 cm.

Transfer the lettering on to this material using dressmakers' carbon and embroider with stem stitch. The lettering can be copied from any lettering or alphabet book, or do it freehand (as mine was).

Cut tartan material into 5 cm wide strips and attach (right sides together) to the embroidered block. Trim the centre if necessary. Attach the tartan strips along the shortest sides first, then along the horizontal sides.

Cut a backing piece and the padding the size of the bordered block.

Place padding material on a flat surface. On top of this pin the backing material (right side up) and on top of this pin the embroidered and bordered block (right side down).

Machine stitch around three sides and then turn the block right side out. Turn in small hems along the remaining side and machine stitch on the right side. Trim the wadding back if necessary.

Attach the block to the plaited wreath at the corners with neat hand-stitching.

### Bow And Binding

(Alternatively, use ribbon).

Turn under small hems along edges of each strip and join the contrasting coloured strips together right sides out. Machine stitch as close to each outside edge as possible. If desired use an embroidery stitch on your machine in contrasting colour. Press.

Cut off enough of the stripping and use it to bind around the top of the wreath so as to hide the join and stitching. Cut off the excess, turn in the raw edges and top-sew, then top-sew the binding neatly into place – the edges will finally be covered by the bow.

Turn in the raw edges of the remaining strip and sew neatly. Tie a bow in this remaining stripping and

attach to the wreath with small, neat stitching.

Attach a curtain ring at the back from which to hang the wreath.

### ORANA!

#### CHRISTMAS WALL HANGING

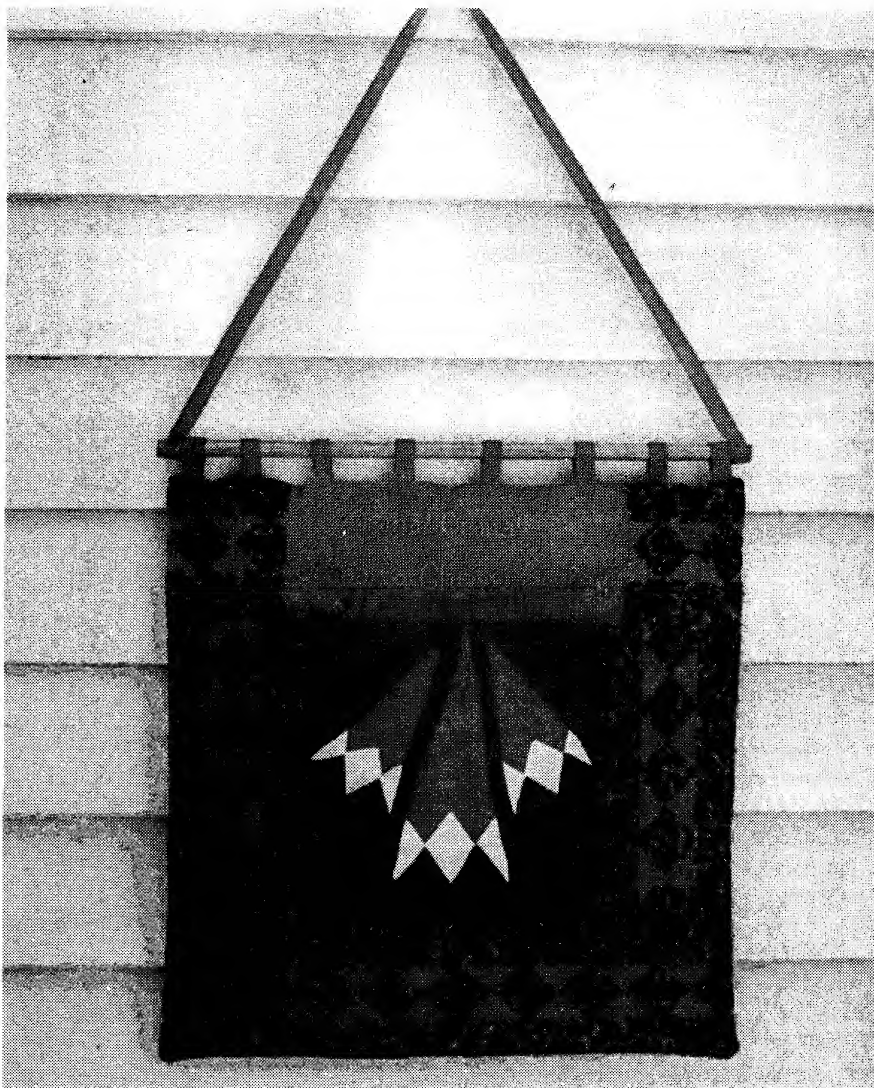
##### Materials Needed

- approximately half a metre of Christmas print material

- approximately 1 metre of matching material for backing and Seminole strip (or use remnants)

- remnant of material for central block
- patchwork bits and pieces for central block whether it is patchwork or applique
- contrasting embroidery cotton
- machine cotton
- dowel rod

This wall hanging also utilises strips of Seminole patchwork and an embroidered section surrounding a central block with an



A Christmas wall hanging that can be re-used each year. To make a special gift, use a personalised message.

Australian theme, in this case, to highlight our special Australian Christmas song. The central picture can be anything of your own choosing. I chose to construct a patchwork block of Australian Christmas bells which was made up from instructions given in a library book.

There are many freely available Australian designs to be found in books on the shelves of your local library, or to be purchased in your local bookshop or craft shop. Instead of a patchwork block, you might decide to applique an Australian bird, animal, or flower. Again, many designs are freely available for you to copy in published books. Also look at children's picture books in the library and colouring books for ideas.

#### Making The Hanging

For the wall hanging it is best to begin with the central block (applique or patchwork) of your choice. When this is completed, embroider the Orana (or other Australian Christmas greeting) section of the border, transferring the lettering to the material using dress-makers' carbon in the same way as

instructed for the mouse stocking. (Make sure this fits correctly across the top of your decorative central block.) Then join Seminole strips to either side, then add Seminole striping along the bottom and sides.

Complete the wall hanging by adding a backing piece with internal padding, in the same way as instructed for the Hogmanay wreath central block, but leaving the top edge open, turning the whole hanging right side out through this top opening. Next, turn in small hems to conceal the raw edges along the top and press.

Make a long strip of matching material by folding a 5 cm strip in at the edges and then folding it in half and machine stitching down the sides as close to the edges as possible. The strip should be long enough to make hanging loops through which the dowel rod is inserted along the top of the wall hanging, as well as a long hanging strip as shown in the photograph.

Place the loops for the dowel insertion at equal intervals along the top

with the ends securely tucked inside the top edge. Pin, tack and machine sew along the top hem of the wall hanging, securing all loops and closing the top opening. Continue around the entire outside, as close to the edge as possible for a neat finish.

Pin everything through all thicknesses using quilting pins, then tack and machine sew along all main seams, called 'in the ditch quilting'. Press.

Slide the dowel through the loops and attach the hanging strip to dowel ends.

Happy Christmas!



#### COCKROACH CATCHER

Take a jam jar and put a few drops of red wine and a little bit of fruit cake in the bottom. Smear a thick wipe (about 4 cm) of Vaseline around the top inside. Paste paper to the outside of the jar so that the cockroaches can get in but not out. The catch may be fed to frogs, kookaburras, tawny frogmouths, or whatever else fancies them.

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# WATER WRINKLES

by John Mount, Woodford, Qld.

The Persian king Xerxes I (486 – 465 BC) is well known for his massive invasion of ancient Greece (480 BC) via two bridges of boats which he painstakingly built across the Hellespont. However, before he could put his army of 500,000 across (Herodotus says 5,000,000) a storm severely wrecked both bridges. This caused Xerxes to fly into a rage and order the sea to be whipped as punishment. Centuries later water would be employed to turn the mills to provide bread for sustenance and to eventually provide steam for the industrial age.

The preceding is merely an example of the love-hate relationship mankind has endured with water throughout history. With drought we don't get enough, but with floods and tsunamis we get too much. One often wonders if there could ever be such a thing as a happy medium.

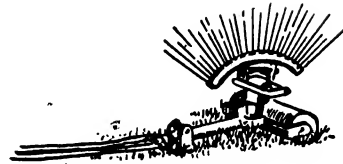
It has been calculated that the water from every dripping tap and from every other source of wasted drinking water in Australia in one year, equals the volume of water in Sydney Harbour.

## WATER SAVING IDEAS

Sprinkle or hose the garden at sundown to ensure that the roots of plants get their share of the water and don't lose any to evaporation. If it's possible, try digging a channel, or burying old perforated piping near the garden to redirect runoff water to the plants. Trickle or drip irrigation is another good method of conserving water. If you don't have a dual-flush toilet system place a house brick (or a clean stone of similar size) in the cistern.

There are of course many simple things that can waste water; these include letting the tap run while you brush your teeth, boiling more water for a hot drink than you really need and tipping the rest out, turning on a garden sprinkler and forgetting about it, not fixing a leaking tap or cistern, spending too long in the shower or bath.

Supplementing one's drinking water can be accomplished by the use of plastic sheeting. A large sheet of clean plastic can be stretched out above the



ground with one edge hanging a little lower to allow rainwater to fall into a nonmetallic container. A surprisingly large amount of drinking water, as well as distilled water for car batteries and steam irons, can be caught in this fashion. Even plastic buckets standing on the ground can catch a fair amount of rainwater.

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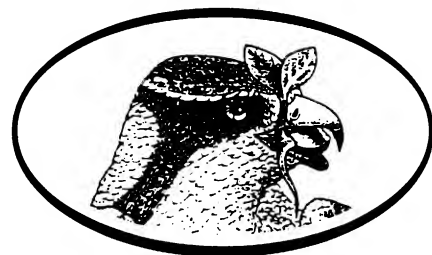
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# TOMATOES

## MAKE IT EASY ON YOURSELF

by John Holland, Flinders, Vic.

There must be a better way! I waited to anybody who cared to hear. It was Saturday. It was 39° C. The family was at the beach. And what was I doing? Tying up tomatoes. What *was* I doing! Every year the tomatoes are at their most demanding in the hottest weather, when I would much rather be doing things other than looking after them. It was too much – there must be a better way to grow tomatoes than having to spend hours tying the vines up.

Over the years I had tried all sorts of support strategies. In a pot (fail). The stake and string method (bare pass). The prune to four leaders and tie to four stakes method (fail). The let it go and fall on the ground method (fail), and the tie/weave to vertical mesh method (just pass). I had thought that the last of these would be the answer to all my prayers. I had made a significant investment in mesh. Erected it supported by star pickets in an impressive display of engineering competence. I watched the tomatoes grow vigorously, due to my excellent husbandry. Very vigorously. Very vigorously indeed! Help! Before I knew it they needed either hacking back with a brushcutter, or careful pruning and tying up on the mesh trellis. More work in mid-summer. It was too much. My favourite food was keeping me off the beach. I determined that next year it was going to be different – or else drastic measures: no more tomatoes.

### EUREKA! A BETTER WAY

Over the following winter I scoured my books and magazines looking for a different tomato support method. What I was looking for, essentially, was a growing method that once set up could be left to its own devices until picking time came around. Most advice was of the 'tie to a stake' variety. Not good enough. Then, just when I was about to consider the possibility of no more Mortgage Lifters and Green Zebras for next summer I found it. Tucked away in an American organic magazine, a read-

er's tip. A dear old lady (let's call her May, but I've forgotten her name) had been growing her tomatoes for years this way, and swore by its effectiveness. I remember when I first read it thinking how extravagant it was in its use of materials, and what a lot of fuss it must be to set up, and how my stake and string method was just as good. That was before I had two children and wanted to be down the beach with them whenever I could. I read the tip carefully. She had used chicken wire. I wasn't so sure of that. Perhaps a mesh with a bigger hole would be better. I already had the materials from last year's less-than-satisfactory support trials. If it worked, I would be able to set the supports up and leave my tomatoes alone while I splashed in the shallows and paddled in the rock pools. Yes, I would grow tomatoes next season.

### HOW IT WORKS

May's tomato support system basically involves a bigger up-front investment in setting up the trellis than normal. This is the trade-off for all that free



time in mid-summer. The key is that the trellis is laid horizontally over the garden bed after bed preparation, and supported by stakes (see photos). In order to be effective you need to have several layers of trellis. I used three based on 450 mm between levels. The mesh width covered two rows of plants. From this you can see that for three levels more trellis material is needed than would be necessary if used vertically.

For the first two levels I used a type of mesh that is very familiar to rural people, being the mesh used for farm gates. It is sometimes known as 'Riverina Mesh', but goes under many



Tomatoes supported by horizontal mesh – no more staking and tying.

names. It has the advantage of being galvanised and is substantially cheaper than 'rio' (concrete reinforcing mesh) which is not. Rio would be quite suitable of course. The advantage of these mesh types is that they are substantially self-supporting and need only vertical support, cutting down on time and effort putting the trellis up. They also last for next to forever, so as a long-term prospect are well worth the investment. The mesh I used has a hole size of 250 by 100 mm, which leaves plenty of room for growing plants to get through. As an experiment I used chicken wire for the third level, just to see if May had it right after all. It was much more trouble to set up and I wouldn't recommend it if you can go to the expense of the heavier gauge material. In order to protect the eyes of inquisitive children and adult tomato pickers I used pieces of old hose taped to the end of the mesh, where it had been cut.

### DOES IT WORK? YOU BET IT DOES!

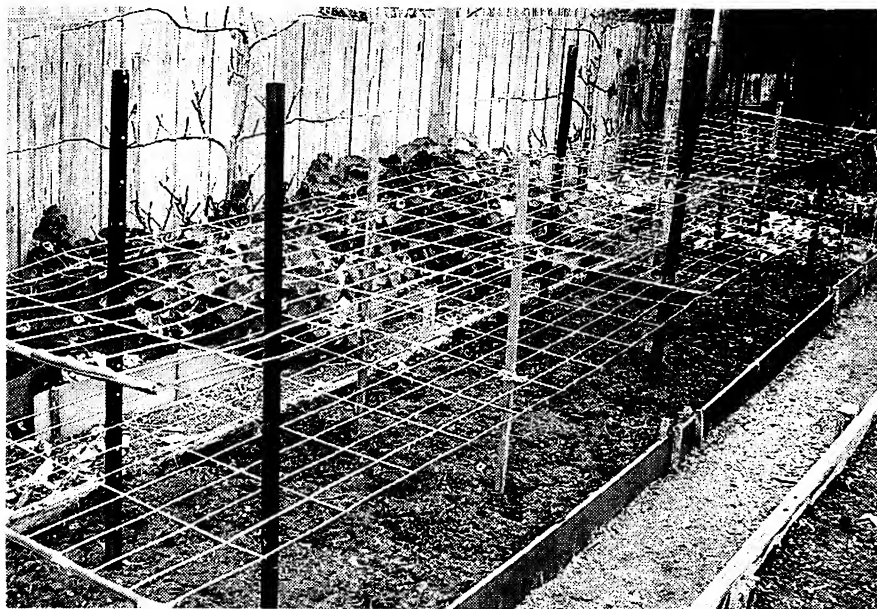
OK. I had set my new trellising system up. To complete the low-work objective I set up a drip system, something I have done since the first year I grew tomatoes when I became much too familiar with the hose. Tomatoes have a long growing season so I had prepared the soil well with plenty of compost prior to embarking on my mechano fantasy. In went the seedling tomatoes in late September, probably a month early for here as the season turned out. A short stake next to each plant helped support them until they reached the first level. Once the soil warmed up, on went the mulch – another low-work necessity which defeats weeds, stops potential disease carrying soil being splashed onto leaves by rain drops, and conserves soil moisture to foster all those good micro fauna and flora. With such management I planted with only a 500 mm gap between each seedling, giving me the opportunity to grow plenty of different varieties.

In good time (they seemed to take forever to get going) the tomatoes grew. They needed tying to their short stake to prevent the November wind from breaking them off, but once they reached the first level I hardly gave them a thought until the hot weather demanded that they be watered. About this time I decided to prune out all the lower leaves to ensure good air movement between



Above: Setting up the first level of horizontal support mesh

Below: The second level in place and attached to stakes.



the mulch and the plants in order to minimise the risk of fungal disease. No further effort beyond the obligatory watering was necessary. As the fruit developed and weighed down their branches they were supported by the trellis, with no attention from me. The wider-gap mesh was much more suitable than the chicken wire which tended to inhibit the upward growth of the plants, and 'caught' the drooping tomatoes rather than supporting their stems.

### THE PROOF IS IN THE EATING

The end result was more tomatoes of more varieties than I had ever grown before, with less effort needed to grow

them. The salad bowl overflowed from late summer through the autumn and into early winter. The pantry was stocked to bursting with puree, and I spent many an hour down the beach saving the kids from potential hazards. This season I'll be refining the system in order to iron out a few kinks, but in the meantime I suggest you too go for a low-work tomato patch this year and spend more time doing the hot weather things you really enjoy, while the tomatoes look after themselves.

*Turn your face to the sun and the shadows fall behind you.*

*Maori proverb*

# A RAMMED EARTH HOUSE

## GESTATION OF A DREAM

by Bette Shiels, Bundaberg, Qld.

Over thirty years ago I was browsing through an old magazine when I came across a photo of a wonderful Japanese style house, with interior water gardens, and immediately fell in love with it. I tore the page out and began redesigning it for some future date when we could afford to build. It became my elusive dream.

But, six children and twenty foster children later it was still only a dream, because of lack of finance and the fact that my husband Col, a civil construction superintendent, spent most of his life moving the family from state to state following employment. Finally, after thirty-four years, our family had flown the coop, and we were able to indulge ourselves. We were in our mid-fifties, and when we told the family we intended building a house by hand, they thought we were joking – we were the ‘oldies’. However, with Col’s construction expertise and my determination, we set out to teach our youngsters that even people approaching their use-by date, could fulfil their dreams.

Our home state was Victoria. We had lived in the magnificent Dandenong Ranges for ten years, the longest time ever spent in one location. Unfortunately, our house at The Basin burnt down and we moved to Gippsland where we built a caravan park, but only stayed two years.

On a holiday to Queensland, Col and I fell in love with Bundaberg and decided to move there. He found work as an inspector on a new bridge being constructed and I began searching for a suitable block of land on which to build our dream.

My original house plan had been lost in our house fire, but it was etched in my mind like script on a tombstone. I had adapted it from weatherboard to brick, until we made a trip across the Nullarbor a few years ago when the temperature was soaring towards 50 degrees Celsius and we almost melted. When we finally arrived in Norseman, Western Australia, we pulled into a motel and were amazed to find how cool the room was without air conditioning.

Investigating the reason for the coolness, we found that the walls were rammed

earth, not unlike the underground dwellings we’d seen in Coober Pedy. Naturally, I readjusted my dream plan to rammed earth and spent the next few years learning about a building system that goes back to the colonial days of Australia.

We were completely captivated by the rammed earth church in Margaret River, WA, and began noticing old rammed earth houses on farms in the South Australian ranges. The buildings are minus their roofs, windows and doors, but the walls still stand firm.

We found a wonderful estate fourteen kilometres out of Bundaberg, which reminded us of our majestic Dandenongs, and bought a two hectare block. Col had reservations about my choice of land because it was elevated and had numerous volcanic rock formations across the front slope, but I could see in my mind’s eye, the landscaping potential of them. All it took to put a driveway through the rocks was a family picnic to which my three sons were invited to bring along their crowbars. Past the rock formation was a flat plateau, where



Bette and Col's rammed earth house around a central courtyard, a lifetime dream come to fruition

our house would be built. Only three large trees had to be removed, because the house design is octagonal.

There is no town water on the estate, so we contacted a water diviner who claimed there was underground water behind the house site. We drilled to 200 metres and only found coal – apparently coal and underground water give the same reading with water diviners. So we opted for common sense and had a dam built at the lowest point of the property.

A gigantic ghost gum stood in the exact spot my husband declared was the best position for the dam, but I couldn't bear to see that wonderful tree destroyed, so, after much heated debate with the bulldozer driver, we now have the only kidney-shaped dam on the estate, and my ghost gum is so grateful it now stands twenty metres taller because of the abundance of water beneath its roots.

The front section of our land is shaly rock and clay, which was ideal for a dam foundation. We used the soil excavated as road base for our driveway. Fortunately, the house plateau had almost a metre of forest mulch, covering rich red soil which we hoped would be suitable for rammed earth. To ensure this was so, we had it tested by the Monash University in Melbourne and, although it cost us over six hundred dollars for the tests, we were thrilled to find the soil was ideal to use without additives.

Col did the setting out of the house and was able to arrange a concreter he knew through his business contacts to lay the slab. Another friend lent us his front-end loader to excavate the site and remove the three gum trees. Before the slab could be laid, we lifted two huge volcanic rocks into the garden area, to be background for our landscaped fishpond.

Our first mistake was choosing a plumber from the yellow pages. We should have asked around town, perhaps at a plumbing supply outlet because they know the best local plumbers. There's no satisfaction in being told after all your water pipes have been misplaced in concrete that 'I could have told you he was no good.' Isn't hindsight a wonderful thing? After a heated confrontation with said plumber, and the sacking thereof, I set to and redesigned the bathroom to accommodate the pipes, instead of vice-versa. The result is most pleasing, as we now have a shower recess-cum-hip bath on a raised platform, which is quite a talking point.

Our second mistake was to employ a relative who was a gold card holder in the building industry, but knew nothing about rammed earth. The result of this mistake was having to pull down a three and a half metre wall, because the builder had forgotten to brace the temporary window frames inside the wall cavity.

We hired construction panels which we keyed together as is done when pouring cement walls. We then rotary hoed the red soil with enough water to turn it to the consistency of soft chocolate. To test it, we would take a handful of soil, squeeze it in the palm of the hand and, when the hand opened, the soil would remain in a pliable lump. It was then thrown against the face of the shovel and if it was perfect it would shatter; if it stayed in a lump it was too wet; if it spread out like sand it was too dry.

The prepared soil would then be shovelled into the wall cavity, at a depth of 300 mm and rammed to half that depth with a trench rammer. Because the rammer had a circular base, and we needed a square one, Col redesigned it and had Mustang Industries, a local firm, convert it for us. Unfortunately, unwritten in any books we'd studied, it takes time to perfect the art of ramming and to learn to avoid the electricity conduits and hurricane rods that are placed in the cavities before the soil.

The result of this inexperience was that when we removed the panels although the texture of the walls looked great the windows were crooked. Normally, Col would go into a screaming frenzy, but I knew we were in real trouble when he went very quiet and strutted off into the bush. The 'helpful' builder, asked, 'Where's he going?' To which I replied, 'I think he's looking for a suitable tree to hang himself'. After a thirty-minute nervous breakdown, he returned and stated, 'The bloody thing will have to come down!' When our ex-relative suggested we widen the windows or build with house bricks, it was time to part company.

Had we not made that mistake, the house would not have been as strong. As it happened, an old friend, Cliff Wallace, arrived when we were demolishing the wall. He was a bushy from way back and watched as we sweated over the large chunks of wall Col levered off and I carted away. He scratched his head a moment and said, 'It's none of my business Col, but I built one of these build-

ings in the early years, and I don't think you have your mixture right. See how it's coming away in blocks? Well it shouldn't.'

We were nonplussed at his words. Hadn't we had a university test our soil? 'Well, at this stage Cliff, I'm open to suggestions. How did you test it?' Col asked. 'Simple, get a plastic drink bottle and cut the top off it, half-fill it with your soil, then top it up with water. Cover the top and shake hell out of it so it's mixed thoroughly, then leave it stand overnight. When you check it in the morning, you should have three layers. Solids at the bottom, fines in the middle and clear water at the top.' We followed his directions and were amazed to find we had only fines at the bottom and clear water above. So it was back to the drawing board, and a month wasted.

This time we set up three testing blocks with various amounts of screenings, sand, and a minute amount of cement added. We allowed each to set overnight, then smashed each one to find the strongest MPA (structural strength), before starting yet again.

Next time, more challenges and achievements with rammed earth.

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# EMERGENCY TOOL BOX

by Wanda Wright, Castlemaine, Vic.

This emergency tool box is kept by your fuse box and is very handy in case of a blackout. It has a built-in lamp which gives you light to work by and there is enough room in this cabinet for fault finding and repair equipment.

The cabinet is an easy piece of woodwork which can be made out of offcuts and scraps. The lamp is an important car accessory (a map-reading light) that also has an integral-switch which is operated by moving the lamp in its holder, and also an extension lead. However, because we are using a 6 volt battery, you will need to change the 12 volt festoon bulb for a 6 volt bulb.

The approximate cost of this tool-box is \$35 (not including the map-reading lamp).

## MATERIALS

### Box

- 2 x 170 mm lengths (top & bottom)
- 3 x 144 mm lengths (uprights)
- 1 x 69 mm square (shelf)

Use 75 mm x 16 mm PAR softwood for the above.

1 x 170 mm square of 4 mm hard-board or plywood (back panel)

1 x 170 mm square of 6 mm plywood (door)

2 x screws to attach unit to wall

2 x miniature butt hinges. As a cheaper alternative, use 4 staples as shown in third diagram.

1 x simple hook catch to hold door closed plus one screw on door

51 x 19 mm panel pins

PVA woodworking glue

drill and drill bit

paint (if desired)

### Accessories

1 x 6 volt battery

1 x 6 volt bulb

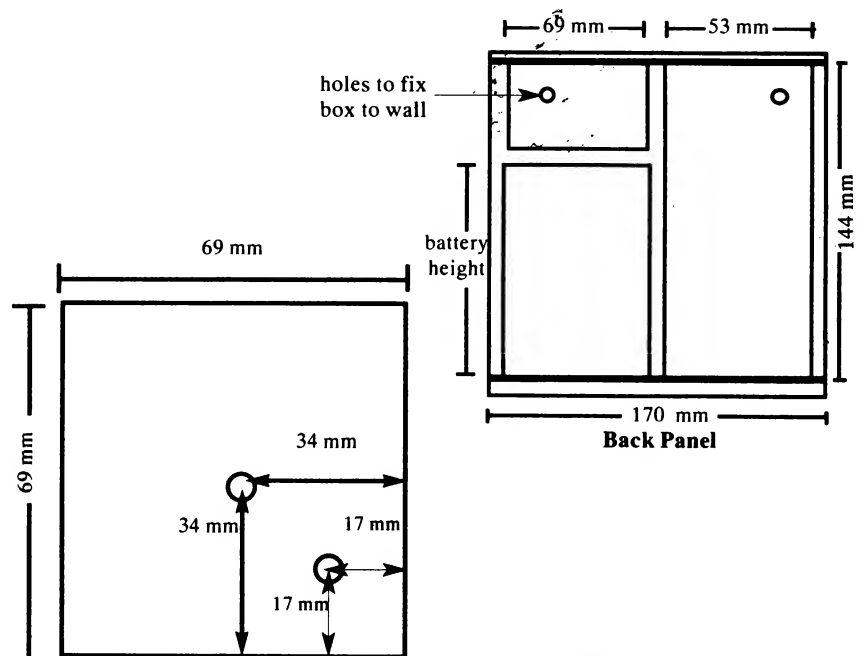
2 x 25 mm roofing bolts, 4 washers and 2 nuts

1 x map-reading lamp (car accessory style)

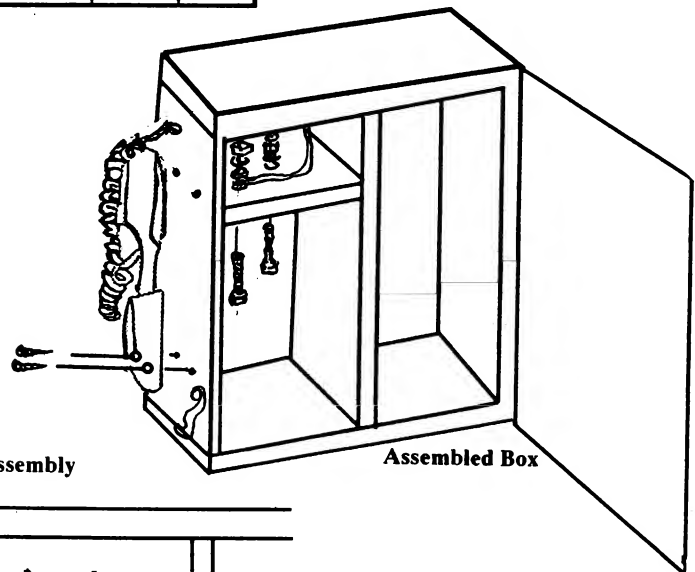
2 x screws to fix lamp holder to box

### Suggested Fault Finding and Repair Equipment

spare fuses or fuse wire

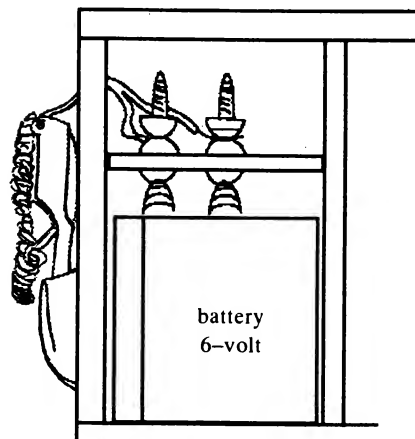


Shelf



Battery Assembly

Assembled Box



(Diagrams not to scale)

electrical screwdriver  
wire cutters  
other tools needed for electrical repairs

### TO ASSEMBLE BOX

Make the box frame using the top and bottom lengths and the upright lengths. Position the third upright so that the shelf will fit snugly in (so that the two consecutive gaps are 53 mm and 69 mm wide). Glue and pin all joints. Drill two fixing holes into the back panel, making sure that they are evenly spaced.

Glue and pin back panel to box.

Drill a 5 mm hole in the box side for the lamp flex to go through.

Attach the door to the box with hinges or staples.

Paint if you desire to.

Fix hook latch to side of box and have

a corresponding screw on the door to hook over.

### Terminal Positions

Drill holes as shown in box shelf (previous page). Glue and pin shelf inside box.

### CONNECTING BATTERY & LAMP

Insert the two roofing bolts pointing upwards into the shelf. Add two washers and one nut to each bolt.

Insert lamp flex through hole in the side of the box and connect the wires to the terminal bolts, between the two washers, and tighten the bolts.

Screw the lamp holder to the side of the box. Change the bulb to the 6 volt bulb and place lamp in holder.

Install the 6 volt battery, making sure that its contacts are connecting with the terminal bolts.

Test lamp to see if everything works okay.

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# Livestock Health and Management

## Information You Need but Haven't Known Where to Ask

If you have queries on any type of livestock send them in and we'll get our panel of experts to research the problem for you. Send them to Livestock Advice Page, Grass Roots, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

### THE IDEAL LAYER

Any advice on breed of chicken to purchase for placid nature, large number of eggs, preferably brown spotted, and well suited to cold winters? Have heard that crossbreds lay better than purebreds. Is this fact or fiction?

**Marilyn Tulloch & Adrian Thomas,  
GLENLYON 3461.**

*It's pertinent to start off answering your final question. Yes, the commercial hybrids do lay better than purebreds, much better in fact, and they also out-produce the backyard crossbred that is found on many properties. At present there is an excellent commercial bird available that is placid, is an outstanding producer of large, brown-shelled eggs and is hardy in most environments. This is the Isa Brown, a small-bodied, silver and buff coloured bird. Look for suppliers in poultry classifieds in local or agricultural newspapers. This hybrid has not been trouble free but now appears to have overcome earlier susceptibility to Mareks disease. An inclination towards feather pecking and cannibalism also appears less of a problem now. If you were to prefer a pure breed, either the Barn-evelder or Welsummer would be appropriate. Both are very placid, lay dark eggs, cope well in cold areas and are very attractive to look at. Egg output is fair when compared to commercial stocks. Look in the 'Poultry Breeders Directory' for contacts.*

### ITCHY DOG

I have a Border Collie/Bearded Collie that suffers constantly from eczema and ear infections. I use Frontline to deter any flea bites, but he still scratches, thus creating a bad skin odour and the losing of hair. I am trying Omega Pet Liquid Supplement which contains different oils for his skin.

**Debbie Tranter  
SAMFORD 4520.**

*The subject of eczema and itchy dogs has been raised in this column previously and you may find the advice provided in issue No 122 helpful. In No 127, we have printed a short summary of the diet recommended by Pat Coleby for maintaining healthy dogs. If you do not have her book, 'Natural Pet Care', then a copy of this dog diet is essential. Once your pet is on a healthy, well balanced diet both the skin condition and ear infection should speedily clear up.*

*Pat recommends the following wash for immediate relief from the itching: mix a tablespoon of cider vinegar and a tablespoon of copper sulphate (bluestone) until dissolved in half a litre of warm water and gently sponge it over the irritated areas. Do not use near eyes.*

### ORGANIC PIG KEEPING

My husband and I are very interested in starting up organic free range pig farming but have no experience and would appreciate any advice or help.

**Denise & Alex Bonfiglioli,  
KARANGI 2450.**

*You are very fortunate in that organic pig keeping has been covered in previous issues of the magazine. An article outlining a GR couple's experience with organic pig keeping was featured in No 121. You may also have missed the short story in No 127 on raising pigs.*

*Other issues to feature pigs were No 107 (Wessex Saddleback Breed), No 104 (coloured pigs), No 112 (farrowing), No 52 (raising) and No 57 (rearing piglets). A helpful book to seek out is 'Outdoor Pig Production' by Keith Thornton, published by Butterworth Heinemann Aust. This is a hardback and priced about \$55, so if too expensive enquire and see if it is possible to obtain it on the inter-library system. The book is English and so it may be wisest to view it first and ascertain how relevant it is to Aussie conditions and methods before purchasing.*

### CULL DIFFICULT ROOSTERS

I would like to comment on rooster behaviour, that is, a male that raises his hackles or is strutting in an aggressive manner. Some sixty years ago an Old English Game cock, 'a quiet one', struck, driving both spurs deep into my wrist. The result, four months in plaster. I had lifted his broody mate to check her eggs, she squawked, he struck! I believe a rooster that threatens or attacks should, without exception, be a dead rooster. Method: a sharp tomahawk and chopping block close to a peach tree. Execute rooster, hang on peach tree to drip dry, good for curly leaf. Then, the recent conjee recipe from John Holland's wife would perhaps be a tasty ending.

Recently, I saw a lady send a toddler

into a pen to collect eggs – please GRs, even a female fowl may hurt a small child; there was a large rooster in that pen and the outcome could have been disastrous.

Most farm people would not turn their backs on a Jersey bull, a ram or billy goat. A rooster can strike with immense force to drive home its spurs. Never turn your back on a rooster, keep the spurs cut back, a blunt hacksaw blade will do the job.

**Ken Woods,  
SHOREHAM 3916.**

*You do not take all the spur off, just the pointed end. Spurs are like nails, the ends are free from blood-carrying capillaries, but if you cut back too much not only will it be painful for the bird but may bleed profusely. File gently around cut edges.*

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# ECO NEWS

## CALICIVIRUS UPDATE

Late last year the results of a two-year study on the rabbit calicivirus showed that it continues to be effective in controlling rabbit numbers. It has been more successful in arid areas than it has in wetter locations, with an initial population crash of up to 90 percent in dry zones and an average of 65 percent in other areas. The study also confirmed that greater success is achieved when the calicivirus is used in conjunction with other control measures.

## GREEN CORRIDORS

Corporate sponsorship to the tune of \$500,000 from Amcor is enabling local conservation groups to begin a massive programme of revegetation along Melbourne's degraded waterways. The first stage will begin in autumn 2000 and involve planting along creek and river banks in 41 sites across eight municipalities. Melbourne Water has undertaken the planning and research and will liaise with the hundreds of community groups involved. It estimates that \$40 million over the next 25 years will be necessary to ensure sustainable vegetation corridors along over 5000 kilometres of degraded urban waterways. Landcare will also be involved in the management of the project.

## CHEMICAL BAN

From June 30, 2001 the use of the organophosphate chemical parathion-ethyl will be banned in Australia, its sale ceasing a year earlier. The chemical has been used for insect control of sugar cane and other subtropical crops. It can affect the human nervous system, causing muscular weakness, blurred vision, profuse perspiration, confusion, vomiting and pain. Death from respiratory failure is possible. This is the first chemical to be completely banned under a national review programme which has been under way for four years. Other reviewed chemicals such as atrazine and endosulfan have been restricted but not banned.

## BUTTERFLY BITS

A corn variety, Bt corn, genetically engineered to exude a poison that kills pest caterpillars, now accounts for



more than a quarter of the corn grown in the USA. Pollen from these corn plants blows on to nearby milkweed plants, the food source of the monarch butterfly larvae, thereby poisoning it as well. Other nonpest species of moths and butterflies are also at risk. The monarchs are already facing ecological pressures on their migratory flights between Mexico and southern California and states further north. About half of the monarchs that spend winters in Mexico go through their larval stage in the US corn belt.

Meanwhile, in north-eastern New South Wales and south-eastern Queensland efforts are underway to rehabilitate the once-common Richmond birdwing butterfly. Rainforest clearing has caused fragmentation of its habitat and a sharp drop in population. Female birdwings lay their eggs on a vine, the Richmond birdwing vine, the leaves of which are the sole food of the caterpillars. The CSIRO, in conjunction with NSW National Parks and Wildlife service and over 150 schools in the butterfly's range, has been taking part in a project to replant the necessary vines to create a corridor for the butterflies to travel along. Others in the community with the vine growing in their gardens are being encouraged to participate by 'adopting a caterpillar'.

Also important to the butterfly's survival is the removal of the environmental weed, Dutchman's pipe. The leaves of this vine exude a scent that attracts the female butterfly to lay her eggs on them. Unfortunately, they are poisonous to the caterpillars.

Anyone interested in the project can find out more by contacting Sue Scott, CSIRO Science Education Centre, Long Pocket Laboratories, PMB 3, Indooroopilly 4068.

## MICROBES TO THE RESCUE

A major environmental problem worldwide is the contamination of

underground water supplies with a variety of pollutants including pesticides, oils, industrial solvents and other chemicals. The CSIRO is working on a method of eliminating these contaminants so the water is once again safe for consumption and domestic use.

Ground-breaking research is concentrating on developing a clean-up method based on the use of native Australian soil microbes to break down the pollutants. The microbes will be used in a permeable layer, or curtain, through which the water can flow, but the polluting substance cannot. The type of microbe used will vary with the target pollutant.

The first test of the new method will be on a plume of atrazine contaminating the water beneath a Perth suburb, the legacy of a chemical spill some years ago.

## BROLGA CONSERVATION

Victorian landowners in association with the Victorian Trust For Nature have embarked on a project to preserve brolga habitat. These elegant birds, common in northern Australia but now rare in Victoria, need wetlands and shallow swampy areas for breeding habitat and food. In Victoria, about 90 percent of these areas occur on private land. Farmers participating in the project are encouraged to preserve both permanent and seasonal wetlands to provide habitat for the brolgas and other birds, which, in turn, will assist in insect control. Wetlands that are fenced to keep out stock will grow grasses, rushes and sedges to provide a sustainable ecosystem.

For more information on brolgas contact Sue Mudford: 03-5599-5223, or Trust For Nature: 1800-999-933.

## STICK-NEST RAT RE-INTRODUCTION

The greater stick-nest rat, extinct on the Australian mainland for over fifty years, has recently been re-introduced to a predator-free sanctuary of 1200 hectares in WA. Since 1990 the remnant population of the once-widespread rat has been breeding successfully on the predator-free 163 hectare Salutation Island in Shark Bay.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear Megg and Mary,**

I began farming organically in 1975 and was being guided by a holistic book which covered this subject, this lifestyle, very thoroughly. Several friends borrowed the book and I have not seen it since 1978. As my partner and I now wish to establish a predominately self-sufficient life on the Sunshine Coast, north of Brisbane, we would dearly love to locate this book again. Would anyone be aware of a way we might locate this book which was written by JJ Rodale and published I think by **RODALE PRESS**? The title I am not sure about but was on the topic of organic farming of vegetables and fruits.



**William Hamilton,**  
Ph: 07-3371-4304.

**Dear GR Friends,**

I would like to **MOVE TO THE NORTH COAST (NSW)** in the near future. I will be looking in the Ballina-Bangalow-Murwillumbah areas. Would some kind readers please write to me and let me know a little about these areas. Info like: can you buy locally grown produce, are there rivers or water holes you can swim in, what is the public transport like? I have four children, two teenagers, and I would like to be somewhere where there are opportunities for them. Any info would be greatly appreciated. Does anyone know where I can purchase or obtain: *The Grass Roots Family Book, The Grass Roots Bumper Book*?

**S McGowan,**  
37 Lawson St, MUDGEE 2850.

**Dear GRs,**

This is a letter I wrote and sent to our local newspaper in the Grafton area. I encourage readers to take similar action in their local area:

The next time you bite into a carrot, think about where it came from. Odds are it probably did not come from the Clarence Valley. Some carrots sold in Grafton are grown in Western Australia and backloaded in refrigerated transports to the east coast markets. The beer that flows through the taps in Grafton's pubs and clubs was for many years made in Grafton but now travels seven hours on a truck from Sydney.

In Portland Victoria, the fish sold in the only supermarket were unloaded off a local fishing boat, trucked to Melbourne, processed and packed in a polystyrene container, and returned to Portland as frozen three-day-old fish, and sold a third dearer than the fresh product at the local fish co-op. There is a 40 percent chance that your toothpaste was made in New Zealand. Check next time you brush your teeth.

**LOCALISM** is the practice of getting what we need and disposing of extra produce locally. This often has the added benefit of providing organic, chemical-free, fresh food, which may lead to creating employment within our community.

For those readers who have recently travelled the Hume Highway, you would have noticed a continuous line of semitrailers travelling between our two largest cities. Are we really meant to believe that most of the food consumed in Victoria cannot be produced there and likewise in NSW?

But what can one person do? Heaps! In 1988 a product came onto the market, Safe recycled toilet paper, wrapped in a plastic wrapper. I wrote one simple letter to Safe suggesting that their product would be far better for the environment wrapped in recycled paper. The manager wrote back thanking me and of course the rest is history. Smart business, as I for one have used their product ever since and that's a lot of toilet paper. Our two mega Australian supermarket chains need to change from the trend of cakes and eggs being wrapped in plastic packets. At least cardboard egg boxes are made from a renewable and recyclable resource.

One of the best practices to promote localism is to give any excess produce to friends and neighbors. How much fruit is rotting on the lawn in our backyards? It could simply be placed in a neighbour's letter box and maybe in a couple of weeks it might return in

a jam jar. It is impossible to know where the fresh produce in our larger stores came from without asking a staff member, so in the near future I intend to approach Grafton's main food outlets, asking them to include on the price sign the area the food came from. This should be simple as they do not hesitate to include on the current signs, NZ apples or NZ pears. What about Grafton potatoes or Clarence Valley eggs?



**Michael Barrett,**  
NYMBOIDA.

**Dear GR,**

I bought a house on five acres near Federal NSW four years ago. I am working in Japan to pay for it. Every year I go and work on the land there. There is one major problem: **GRASS**. It needs a ride-on to maintain it. It looks like a golf course. I must get rid of a lot of the grass. How can I do it? And what's the best season? I will have an ample supply of cardboard when I move next year. Can it be used to kill the grass so I can build gardens over it? As far as I know the grass is broadleaf paspalum, but it could be something else. Would anyone who has proven ideas please write or fax me. I'm living in fear of all that grass! Also, any ideas on cows as lawn mowers? One more request. I'm looking for the *Complete Book on Tofu*. I have the newest paperback version but I want the big original one. I'd be happy to pay for it of course.

**Rasa Dover,**

37-3 Shonaka, Kowata Uji Shi, KYOTO. 611-0002 - Japan.

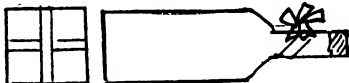
**Dear GR,**

I'm happy for 'Possum Jack' and his new love! Hope you are both very well and very happy. But, how did you do it? I can't even receive two replies from 20 letters (I mailed a lot of 45 cent stamps for a pensioner). Wrote to all who said they were ready to tear their hair out with loneliness and those others who needed advice on specific subjects. Wrote out by hand copious recipes, even have offered my home to strangers I believed were having a worse time than I. But now I only have one thing to say on all this lack of manners: read my diary!

With that off my chest, I was happy to see seedlings of herbs and food plants growing and even put a circle of sticks around each one, but the landlord mowed them all, as well as my lawn. I'd been in my new place two weeks, recovered enough to dig one little garden and put seed down to have my lunch - landlord burnt all my organic, herb and vegie seeds I'd saved for a year. Who sent me winged bean seed? HELP!



**'The Lodge', Lot 2, Tea Tree Road, TEA TREE 7017.**



**Gypsy**

**Dear GR,**

I read the interesting story by Peter Harry (GR132) which I could add to, in fact supply the answer to the problem. I live by myself by the sea, doing odd jobs on my lathe, welding and making one-off things whilst waiting for the Mrs right to come along or write to me. Over the years I have had the need to cut open underground petrol tanks, or any other **TANKS THAT MIGHT EXPLODE**. After taking every bung out, I feed the exhaust from a diesel motor into the tank for at least an hour, that is a five hundred gallon tank, smaller tanks require less putrefying of the air in the tank, then I start cutting with confidence. The diesel exhaust fumes seem to contaminate the explosive gas formed when cutting the steel. The diesel engine must remain going at all times while carrying out the process. I have also found it works equally well when welding up holes in car and motorcycle petrol tanks, or welding 44 gallon drums together to store grain in. The first time I used this process was over 45 years ago and it has always worked well. I wouldn't try it on a container that had held nitro glycerine or any space-age chemicals or poisons.

**Daniel Davis,**  
Cardiff St, MOERAKI NZ.

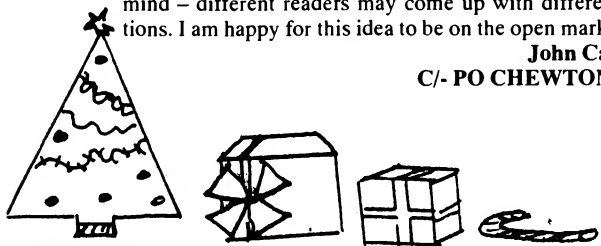


# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear Sir,

Here is an idea which your readers may wish to develop further. At certain latitudes, a **FOCAULT PENDULUM** will rotate through 360° in 24 hours. It will not be the case in the tropics, though it is true at the latitudes of southern Australia. This turning has torque dependant on the masses of the Earth and the pendulum. This torque may be used to wind up a spring which drives the pendulum. Thus the pendulum never stops. This is a gravity motor driven by the rotation of the planet. Excess torque may be used to drive a generator, thus gaining cheap electricity. A number of ways of driving the pendulum come to mind – different readers may come up with different solutions. I am happy for this idea to be on the open market.

John Caldwell,  
C/- PO CHEWTON, 3451.



Dear Grass Roots,

This past year I've tried my hand at establishing a vegie garden in a garden that was a run-down ornamental garden. We had a very dry period which made it hard to just utilise grey water alone and I found I had to use the tap a few times more than I wanted. A most wondrous thing has happened, a mango tree has sprung up from my kitchen scraps buried in the ground. Someone gave me some horseradish and lemon grass. It definitely was a year full of treats.

Try this feel-good **AROMATHERAPY BURNER TREAT**: 5 drops frankincense, 6 drops clary sage, 10 drops orange in a burner will create only sweet thoughts. Enjoy.

Could someone help me? I've misplaced my recipe for a home-made **BEEWAX AND LINSEED FURNITURE POLISH**. Also does anyone know a brand of 100 percent cranberry juice?

Margit,  
21 Loughnan St, COOLAMON 2701.

Dear Megg & Readers,

This is my first contribution to the pages but I'm certainly not a newcomer to GR. I've been reading it for years, marvelling at some of the hints which come up from years ago (I am 73) and enjoying every bit. With all the mod cons to make life easier now, I do miss some of the little things like the **INTENSE PERFUME** the flowers used to have, **CHRYSANTHEMUMS** in particular. I've tried to find some of those old ones my grandmother had a very long time ago. They seem to be all gone now. If anyone has any and would sell me some (even one) I would be most grateful. Till next time.

Edna Whalan,  
272 Manilla Street, MANILLA 2346.

Dear GRs,

Re: Feedback in issue 133. MaryMara C-Zecher (p40) advises people to take vitamin B6 for carpal tunnel syndrome, but she leaves out the essential fact that **B6 MUST NOT BE TAKEN WITHOUT B COMPLEX**. Actually, there is more to it than that anyway. It's basically a potassium deficiency. I think it is unwise to publish a statement like that, because B6 is dangerous unless taken with a complex. Some years ago, the medical profession touted B6 (without giving the above information) as a slimming aid. There was nearly tragedy, as it affects the brain adversely and several women became very ill.

Tom Fletcher (p42) about my farm buying article (GR130) and weeds. I did not take the picture and not know what weed it is or where it proliferates. Anyone really interested should read Charles Walter's, 'Weed Control Without Poisons' (*Acres USA*), where he points out that all types of weeds, good or bad, that proliferate in an uncontrolled manner are due either to bad soil management, ie compaction, water-logging etc, or mineral imbalances. I have found this to be absolutely right. In my present garden I have gone through all the

really bad ones, bent grass predominating, and three years of hard work forking it out and liming now leaves me with a few of the fertile type weeds such as those Tom Fletcher mentions, and hoeing or hand-weeding remove them very satisfactorily. The article mentioned could not include all names, but lists are to be found in several of my books. However, the so-called weeds Tom refers to (mostly food sources) only take over on overfertilised soils (usually and hopefully from compost) where the gardener/farmer has not paid enough attention to the lime mineral levels. An analysis would have pointed this out. I do not consider any of those he mentioned to be weeds in the serious sense as either animals or the farmer could live off them quite safely. Wireweed (pigweed etc), *Polygonum aviculare*, is a native of the UK. Here it tends to grow in lime-deficient areas where the soil is quite good, and it is higher in protein than lucerne – actually a very valuable fodder crop. Three years ago I was given one very ill horse which virtually lived on it and recovered its health in a remarkably short time.

Pat Coleby,  
91 Church St, MALDON 3463.

Dear GR,

My husband pointed out battery dangers – after his experiences of exploding ones, he took care when he had charge of the large number to keep ready for emergencies. Now I too must add my warning – **QUININE IS NOT ALWAYS RIGHT FOR CRAMP!** I had cramps that tore my calf muscles, when about six months pregnant with my second child. Given quinine tablets I came into false labour and, despite immediately dropping off the medication, came into a most unpleasant form of trouble. A neighbour with five children already castigated the doctor for his ignorance and helped me until my baby arrived. He had projectile vomiting for five months and at times was fed two-hourly round the clock. With a toddler at foot, a husband on shift work, and my health down, I have good cause to remember. In pregnancy, avoid quinine. Salt tablets were given to passengers on liners pre-war, sweating took salt, without it people developed cramp.

MR Cumming  
33 Phillip St, TOKOROA, NZ 2392



Hello Friends,

I see from the Feedback letters that many people are seeking **LAND IN TASMANIA**. I own 6.5 acres of land in Mathinna. It is very fertile with a permanent creek and could support 10 tipis or about 20 people. I hope to find people with energy to build a **SMALL TIPI VILLAGE**. I enjoy working collectively. Together we can establish a fruit, nut and olive orchard. I've built a large rock sauna for the winter and there is plenty of wood to stay warm. An 18 ft tipi will cost you about \$1000. It's a very simple and comfortable lifestyle once you have adapted. I'm a compassionate person and I will listen to all your ideas. At this moment I have no phone so please write.

Chris Nelson,  
Lot 1, Bent St, MATHINNA 7214.



Sirs,

Could you please tell me how to find a hand-operated washing machine? I believe that one was once advertised in your magazine. It was called **WONDER WASH**, but the company selling it is no longer at the advertised address. My enquiries there have not been answered. If there is another make of hand-operated table top washing machine it would be very helpful to know about it. Thank you

Jeannette Shavin,  
PO Box 116, PICNIC BAY, MAGNETIC ISLAND 4819.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear Grass Roots,**

Please help me. I am looking for the plant feijoa. It is a cross between a banana and passion fruit taste and they are green when ripe. Thanks.

**Maresa Robbers,**  
183 Gladesville Blvd, PATTERSON LAKES 3197  
email: sandm@eisa.net.au

**Hi There,**

I received quite a few kind responses to a letter I sent re a chronic bad back. I've tried just about all of the suggestions and have had most luck with laser acupuncture administered by a GP. It offers pain relief – not a cure, but at least I've managed to get back on a tennis court and play a half-decent game again! It's all about quality of life isn't it? I just want to say a very sincere thanks to those who wrote. I didn't reply personally for various reasons, but I am sure you felt my gratitude – I certainly sent that!

**AM Hughes,**  
C/- PO, FERNY CREEK 3786.

**Dear Megg & Mary,**

I'd like to thank all those people who have so far sent me red and yellow **GUAVA SEEDS**. I will endeavor to thank you all personally, but it may take some time as I'm trying to help a sick elderly friend get her business and home sold and, with all the rain we've had this year, it's very hard getting a 2 1/2 acre block into trim. My job is to get the garden looking good. The seeds will get planted into pots and transplanted as soon as I can look after them. Thank you all so much.

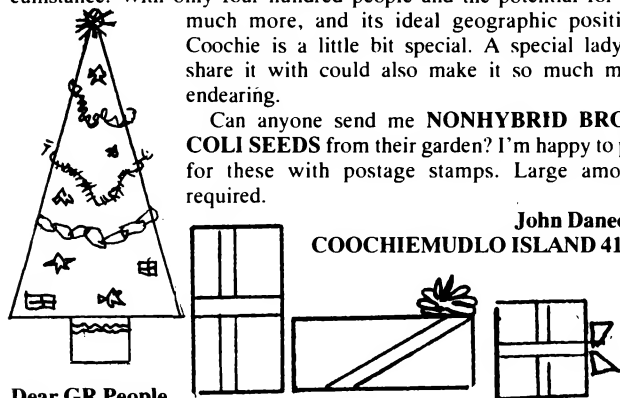
**Shirley Svensson,**  
516 Musgrave Rd, COOPERS PLAINS 4108.

**Dear GRs,**

What makes Coochie unique is that it has all the benefits of living in a capital city. Benefits such as cheap food, petrol, availability of work, and yet it remains countrified. How can you live in a city and secede from the city's inhospitable environment you say? How can Coochie remain relatively free of drugs, major crime and home invasion? By this stage you may be imagining that Coochie is surrounded by a moat, in which case you are correct. Coochie is surrounded by a very large moat. Coochie is an island. As soon as you step on to the jetty Coochie does evoke all the images of a subtropical paradise: the white sandy beaches embraced by the oaks along the foreshore blend into the nature reserve which circumnavigates the island. Indelible images such as the dog that lies in the middle of the road and will not move under any circumstance. With only four hundred people and the potential for not much more, and its ideal geographic position, Coochie is a little bit special. A special lady to share it with could also make it so much more endearing.

Can anyone send me **NONHYBRID BROCCOLI SEEDS** from their garden? I'm happy to pay for these with postage stamps. Large amount required.

**John Danecki,**  
COOCHIEMUDLO ISLAND 4184.



**Dear GR People,**

In the top left corner of Victoria, on the SA border, there is a very small town called Dergholm (pop 21). Really! In town there is a hotel which serves as a general store and post office. Here I live with my brother. We have four acres. I have had many brainstorm over the years as to what to do with it. Here is my latest: **MUSICIANS' RETIREMENT VILLAGE**. I would love to hear from old musos who would like somewhere to live in exchange for a small rent and help growing fruit and vegetables and milking the cow. There are only two prerequisites: 1 – honesty, 2 – good sense of humour.

**Heather Gladman,**  
C/- PO, DERGHOLM 3312.

**Dear GR Readers,**

I wish to make a quilt out of **OLD FLOUR OR OTHER DECORATIVE BAGS**, so if anyone has any to spare, I would be most grateful. Also, as a new GR reader, I have a lot to learn about self-sufficiency etc, so if anyone would like to write to me, I would be very happy to correspond.



**B Nazzari,**  
C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**Dear GR Readers,**

Can anyone help me with my search for **AGEE DOME LIDS** for my three boxes of Agee improved utility jars. Can you still buy them? If so where? Or can anyone suggest ideas instead of jar lids for safe preserving of food, such as wax disc and cellophane? I am really keen to fill all these jars with home-grown delights.

**Louise Gillespie,**  
PO Box 14, BONALBO 2469.

**Dear Grass Roots Chefs,**

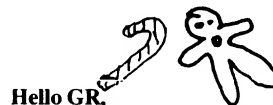
I'm a committed vegetarian who has not lost the desire for a good meat pie. Can anyone help with a recipe for a **VEGETARIAN 'MEAT' PIE**? I've played around with textured vegetable protein but haven't yet succeeded with a good meaty gravy.

**A Hoshcke,**  
13 Flaxton Mill Rd, FLAXTON 4560.

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

In GR 133, the Eco News had a small article on **FLEA TREATMENT DANGER** concerning the hormone s-methoprene. I was wondering if it would be possible for anyone to send me any information that you may have available concerning methoprene. I would like to find out all I can about the compound.

**S Long,**  
PO Box 316, GORDONVALE 4865.



**Hello GR,**

My partner and I are about to purchase 20 acres near Braidwood NSW and build a **STRAW BALE HOUSE**, including a solar system, grey water recycling and all those beaut things. We currently live in Canberra and plan to commute back to the city for work.

When we mention our plans to people we meet here we are met with mostly blank stares, often negative comments, and definitely very little idea about what it actually means to build a house from straw bale. We have, however, had a few people comment that they would like to do it too or at least know more about it. So we have decided that we want to try using the building of our new abode to promote awareness of straw bale house building, though we haven't really got much idea on how to go about doing this. The first logical step was of course this letter. Other things we intend to do are contact various government departments, the Greens, and the media, in the effort to get support and publicity. We haven't yet chosen a company to build our house, but once we do we are hoping that a straw bale workshop could be run on our site. In the past all such workshops have been conducted hundreds of kilometres away. Indeed, the nearest construction company with straw bale experience is in the Sydney region. Once the construction is closer I would like to hold on-site tours during the various stages, though this will require considerable cooperation from the building company involved.

If GR or any readers have any information or ideas that could help us in our endeavour to promote straw bale construction to the wider public we would appreciate their input. Certainly, if alternative methods such as straw bale and mud brick etc are going to be more widely adopted there is going to have to be more public education and awareness of these alternatives.

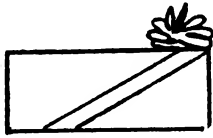
**Karan Munday,**  
70 Tiptree Cres, PALMERSTON 2913.

Please keep letters brief, clearly written and relevant to self-sufficiency topics. Letters pushing barrows (religious, political or other) will not be published.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR,

In Nanango it's pouring with rain and we are celebrating! We bought our little piece of paradise 2½ years ago and are now feeling quite settled. The house is warm and cosy. Chook pen MK 10 is dog proof at last. The Jersey house cow is due to calve next month. The vegie garden has kept us supplied for the past year. Firewood is split, stacked and dry. All is well in our world. We've learnt a lot from GR over the past fifteen years or so and we thank you Megg and all contributors. No produce goes to waste here as we make cottage cheese from excess milk, pickles and jams from our fruit and veg, and even advocaat when eggs are abundant. Being 'two skinny ladies' we've also learnt to accept our limitations and ask for/pay for help when the jobs exceed our capabilities, but we're proud of what we've managed and urge other **WOMEN WHO HAVE THE COUNTRY ITCH** to give it a go. It's a wonderful life. Helping one another is the GR way and we'd like to help other women contemplating this lifestyle. We have cheap, self-contained weekend/short-term accommodation if there's anyone out there who would like to 'try before they buy'. Women can do anything! Do write.



Clare and Paula Colins,  
PO Box 402, NANANGO 4615.

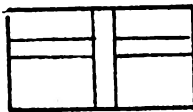
Dear GR Readers,

Could anybody help with a question I have – is there a sister/similar mag to GR in the UK? Also, anyone with tips-help-plans and experience with **POLE HOMES** and building them, would be greatly appreciated.

Jim Evans,  
PO Box 424, MUSWELLBROOK 2333.

Dear Readers,

GR comes via travelling library to four households in our town and we pass it around. Our *Adelaide Advertiser* did a thing (in editor letters) re the labels which won't 'Lego', and the person was satisfied, but I did not know their answer. However – does everyone know the **WET GLAD-WRAP SOLUTION?** Just leave it to soak (well wrapped). Removes sticky labels from new equipment and the registration **DISC ON WINDSCREENS ETC.** We all enjoy the good read.



G Foulis,  
19 First St, WILMINGTON 5485.

Dear Grass Roots,

A quick note, mainly to say thanks to the people who wrote with suggestions about how to get to WA (even one from Switzerland). I've had my holiday and quite a few adventures filled up the two months. I took the Indian Pacific train 'for the experience', but I could have saved the money because it is impossible to buy a single air ticket (a return is \$200 less). I had hoped to catch a freighter boat back, but P & O are the only ones to do this and you must book, through Sydney, quite a long time ahead. Never mind – I detoured through Sydney and Canberra as well. I thought that if I ran out of money I'd better at least have my air ticket home and it was lucky I did not extend my stay as that company went out of business a month after I came back. I also brought a good dose of flu back after being perfectly healthy (germ-wise) all the time away.

I must also tell you that I came home to my little beach home because the sand mine has not eventuated – in fact they might give up altogether, so there's hope I might still live here for a while yet.

On another note – Megg's possum problem should alert people building new houses to make sure the eaves are wide enough so the pests cannot get onto the roof. Climbing plants and trees too close are also good possum highways.

Robyn Eades,  
RSD 119, Naracoopa, KING ISLAND 7256.

Dear GR Readers,

I urgently need to gather any information regarding **COW HORN MANURE MAKING**. If anyone has experience or knows the technique, particularly about after the horns have been dug up, what the mixing procedure is, or if there are any good books etc on the subject I would very much appreciate your help.

Also, has anyone any 'fors' or 'againsts' information on building **MUD BRICK, RAMMED EARTH, OR STRAW BALE** houses? All information on above would be gratefully accepted.



Eileen Beaver,  
PO Box 1183, NARROGIN 6312.

Dear Grass-Rooters,

I have just planted four olive trees and would like to know how to manually **EXTRACT OIL FROM OLIVES**. How was the oil extracted in the days before mechanisation? In a manually operated oil press? If so, would anyone have a plan of one so I can get one built? Or perhaps you have one you wish to sell?

Kathy Gatenby,  
903 Middle Tea Tree Rd, TEA TREE 7017



G'day,

It is 5.30am on a beautiful morning, I am at anchor with my yacht, in a sheltered bay in south-east Queensland. A wallaby hops along the beach barely 75 metres away, a dolphin cavorts lazily past, and the golden sun is just saying 'g'day' through the low coastal scrub. **I AM LIVING MY DREAM** of travel, meeting people, exploring and adventure, and after six years of cruising the NSW and Queensland coast, rivers and islands, I am going to share my lifestyle again. I and my 11 metre yacht have been accepted as hosts in the **WWOOF/ACE Handbook List** for 1999. I was a host on my acreage where the yacht was built, as the swallows reared young overhead, and the chooks laid eggs in the galley. Many and varied are the jobs on a boat, mostly done whilst the yacht is at anchor, before going ashore in the dinghy to explore the bush or deserted beaches. Maintenance is uppermost, cleaning gear on deck, diving under, barnacle removing, or helping with the many stories I have written. Definitely no lawn mowing or weeding. Exploring the coastline by water is so different from conventional means. Most of the coast can be travelled in daylight hours, after consulting the various coastguard people for the weather pattern, avoiding the bad weather in a harbour or river, sheltered, safe, until sunny days and calm seas return. But after six years, I found there was something missing, the land, the people, and small things, like planting a seed, watching it grow, yarns around the fire after a rewarding day working on some project.

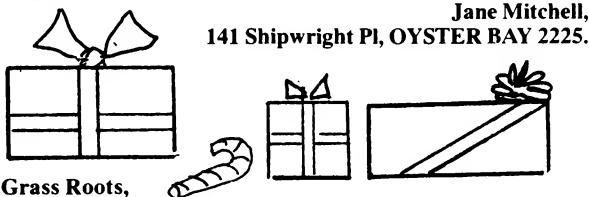
I joined **WWOOFs** again in 1997, as a worker. Dug out my trusty backpack, and parked the yacht at a friend's acreage, (on the mighty Clarence River) and went **WWOOFing** from Tasmania to the Snowy Mountains, then Queensland. I helped set up two host farms that needed help. This is what I needed, the skills I have been using again. I agonised at buying land again, but the **WWOOFing** got me through this. I then thought about getting the yacht as a host. (Maybe a world first.) Now I have both. The land and the ocean. The dream has come true. The yacht is modern, sleeps six, has solar power, refrigeration, gas stove (couldn't fit a woodstove in). I have a laid-back approach, with no time constraints. Helpful, would be GR people with land on or near a deep-water (two metres) river, with no bridges or power lines under 20 metres, that I could call on and help with a project, anywhere – Sydney, NSW to north Queensland. Currently, July-Aug 99 Moreton Bay, heading north till December, with time at Hervey Bay (we all know what happens there) and Fraser Island, which still is a magical place after three earlier trips. Page 143 in the 1999 Blue Book will find me (different address), and now a mobile phone. If no work, a donation to expenses. Psst! need a holiday?

Colin Statham,  
PO Box 411, NERANG 4211  
0408-720-156.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear Grass Roots,

In response to Janet Martin's letter (issue 132) regarding **LEACHING OF CHEMICALS** from newsprint. I am passing on the following quote from Jeffrey Hodges', *Natural Gardening and Farming in Australia*. 'Some people have expressed concern over the use of newspapers as a mulch because of possible detrimental chemicals used either in the paper production process or in the inks used in newsprint. I have investigated this matter and found that there is no reason for concern. There are no heavy metals or organochlorine bleaching agents used on newsprint paper or in the inks. The dyes in the inks are 20 percent carbon black pigment (which is a product of burnt petroleum oils) and a mixture of vegetable (such as linseed) and mineral oils. While carbon black does itself contain some PCBs (which are known carcinogens), the minute amount present – and their susceptibility to heat and ultraviolet light from the sun and to micro-organisms in the soil – suggests they would not be a problem. Higher levels of PCBs would be ingested (from traffic exhausts) just by walking down a busy street or by inhaling the smoke of one cigarette.' I dare say that the same could be said of cardboard. The one thing that most people agree on is that coloured inks should not be introduced into your garden, especially yellow inks which may contain basic cadmium. Another piece of info I came across raised the issue of galvanised metals containing cadmium. Something I have not heard much discussion on.



Jane Mitchell,  
141 Shipwright Pl, OYSTER BAY 2225.

## Dear Grass Roots,

My family and I have recently discovered that we have **FOOD ALLERGIES** and are looking for natural homemade recipes, especially for bread, breakfast cereals, and cakes and biscuits etc. My kids love muesli bars. Does someone know how to make them at home so that they are sugar free (we can have honey). Also, we have just installed a **WOOD STOVE** and would appreciate any tips on how to cook in one.

We are all severely allergic to dairy products and sugar. My son is allergic to corn and barley. My daughter is allergic to wheat and gluten and I am allergic to rye and goat's milk. Can anyone please help us?

Mary-Ann Galea,  
PO Box 29, HELIDON 4344.

Try contacting the National Allergy Association of Australia, PO Box 48, Harris Park 2150.



## Dear Megg & Co,

I have some questions I hope the resourceful 'family and friends' of GR can help me with. My daughter has been diagnosed with CFS. Luckily she does not have the usual food allergies but does have a duodenal ulcer. She found panic attacks were the hardest to cope with so I sent her a bottle of Bach flower remedy – Sweet Chestnut. This is amazing stuff, or as she said: 'It's a miracle, Mum!' I did some research for her and was told CFS can be caused by an enzyme imbalance and L-Serine could be very helpful. As it is rather pricey, about \$42 for a small bottle, I was wondering if anyone had used it and found that it helped.

Next, can any handyperson tell me how to remove those darn **BARBED NAILS** used in punchguns? I was given a nice heap of wood pallets I want to pull apart and recycle, but the nails refuse to come out quietly. I've used a lot of pallets for different things around the house and garden, but usually they are held together with staples. Those, I am a dab hand at pulling apart, but this lot has me stumped and tearing my hair out. Would heating the nail heads with an electric soldering iron help?

Looking back through some of the early GRs I was wondering about the people who intended to or were building **EARTH SHIPS**. These were made from recycled tyres and I believe a film actor in the USA built his house this way. Considering the huge tyre dumps and the terrible problems caused when some idiot decides it would be fun to set them alight, I would like to know how the builders went with the idea and how they worked. About ten years ago I was given a trailer load of tyres, free. As I am on very heavy clay, I use them for small no-digs, two high, and plant dahlias or potatoes in them. I have thought about a small walled garden made from three or four high tyres. Filled with soil and compost, then planted with herbs to spill down the sides. Trouble is, I keep planting trees and shrubs I pick up from the supermarkets when they sell them off for \$1 or \$2. I soak them in chamomile tea and after I plant them, give them a dose of Seasol. Haven't lost one yet; however, I'm running out of space for the walled garden. At least they block off a lot of noise and traffic fumes from the highway! The trees and shrubs I mean.

Jan Atkinson,  
741 Nepean Hwy, MORNINGTON 3931.

## Dear GRs,

I am putting together a book tentatively to be called *From Bush and Sea*. It will contain several sections. The first will be instructions for craft projects made from Australian seedpods and bush recycling. The second will be projects from shells and flotsam collected on beach walks. The third will contain information and hints on growing and using our native flora on the farm to beautify, to help conserve our resources, and for extra farm income and food.

I'd like to include **INFORMATION AND CRAFTS FROM GR READERS** if they have anything they're willing to share in this way. I'd love to receive samples of crafts made from recycled natural bush or beach materials and/or photos, with instructions. Naturally, I'd reimburse postage by return mail, and acknowledgment would be given in the book. Information and your personal experiences of growing alternative/bushfood crops and hints on growing, using and conserving our Aussie trees and plants with recipes (if possible) would all be welcomed.

On another note: a piece of expanding garden trellis painted to match your home makes a tremendous wall holder for Christmas or birthday cards you wish to display, as well as reminder notes, letters to be answered or ready to be posted, and so on.

Lorraine Zinnack,  
PO Box 309, KINGSCOTE 5223.



## Dear GRs,

Yes, it was me phoning frantically for a **CHEESE MAKING SUPPLIES/SUPPLIER**, to find a use for the autumn flush of milk. Neil and Carol Whyman have written a good practical book on cheese making, they also run workshops and sell starter cultures, rennet etc etc. The Rural Shop now mostly sells books, not supplies. There is also another supplier I've found since then in SA – if you want their address, let me know. And finally, I must tell everyone about an excellent book I've 'discovered' written by Bill Mollison (who else!): *Ferment and Human Nutrition*. It is a type of subsistence – self-sufficiency book on utilising natural resources, how to grow and produce our own food and how to use and preserve it and increase its nutritional value. Full of recipes and know-how from different cultures, as well as our own. Well worth the money at about \$35.

And one question for readers: I've read in a book somewhere that rennet can be obtained from the sap of figs. Is this true and how is it done? PS: We're moving from our five acres to our 100 acre dream farm and hopefully 90 percent self-sufficiency. Anybody want to buy five acres in Tassie?

Berni Moolenschot,  
1471 Birrale Rd, WESTBURY 7303.

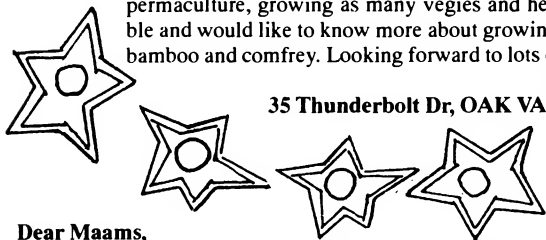
# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear GR Readers,**

Thanks for a wonderful, informative magazine. I am currently reading back copies from my local library. For several years I have been trying to purchase a **SCYTHER**, without any success. Are there any readers who could help me? I am also seeking **EASY SOAP MAKING INSTRUCTIONS**, preferably using pure soap flakes. As I have an abundance of aloe vera plants, I would like to make my own aloe vera soap. Also, I would like to correspond with readers who have **VEGETARIAN RECIPES** to share and ideas to help me become self-sustaining on my five-acre block. I live in the dry tropics of Queensland and rely on rainwater for the house and grey water for the garden. I have chooks and goats and plenty of compost and manure. I am interested in permaculture, growing as many veggies and herbs as possible and would like to know more about growing olive trees, bamboo and comfrey. Looking forward to lots of letters.

**Sue Gibson,**

**35 Thunderbolt Dr, OAK VALLEY 4811.**



**Dear Maams,**

As a reader of GR for many years, I have been intrigued by the letters regarding **CANOLA OIL**. I was a marine engineer for many years and we used to buy rapeseed oil from a Chinese source as the lubricant for the steam and wet cylinders of our steam machinery. It clung better than the mineral oils to the hot wet surfaces. We bunkered once in Aden and took on a few drums of rapeseed oil that was sub-labelled canola. Yes, it performed perfectly in the steam chests, but our Chinese chefs, unbeknown to me at the time, used to use it as a cooking oil. It was some time before I woke up to why we were using so much steam cylinder oil. They used to tell me that canola was the best variety of rapeseed oil that the Chinese had developed and they had bred the poisoned ingredients out of the original rapeseed and rebred it until they were able to produce an ideal mono-unsaturated oil suitable for human consumption.

**Rod Carter,**

**11 Charles Tce, MACLEAY ISLAND 4184.**

**Dear GR People,**

I have been reading GR for 20 years. It's great to read the different stories and hints of those that have moved on to the land. I am still in the city trying to make my small block as productive as I can without sprays etc. Anybody who is interested in **PURE DRINKING WATER**, I have just seen a test on tap, bottled, spring, and filtered water that separates the inorganic compounds from the water. It was really revolting to see what we are drinking as pure. I have found a source of the purest water in the world, I wouldn't drink anything else now. If anybody is interested, please contact me.

**Lorraine McIntosh,**

**PO Box CP191, CONDELL PARK 2200.**

**Dear GR,**

I have been trying for months to find some information on **KEEPING LARGE RABBITS**, but there is such a limited amount in the library, so I am hoping that you or your readers can help me, mainly on housing and breeding. At present I have them in a small shed with an underground chamber (to keep them cool in summer). I am feeding twice a day with grain, horse pellets, carob pods and all sorts of greens and fruit. They seem happy and healthy but don't know their maths. I would appreciate any information that anyone can pass on to me.

**J Calnam,**

**Box 276, KAPUNDA 5373.**

**Dear All At GR Readers,**

Wow! Thanks for such an amazing read. We get so much out of it and can hardly wait for the next issue. Winter here in the mid tropics is quite superb – on days – up to 30 degrees, down to 15 degrees, but can be quite bitter when the good ol' southwester gets going. We live along a river and there's nothing like getting up at 4.45am to -1 or 2 degrees

and going off to work. These temperature variations can destroy one's skin, with any little knock resulting in breaking skin and lots of blood. Being a gardener it's just not possible to make it through without doing so. We both work in the landscape and irrigation industry. Which brings me to **MOROSOI NATURAL SEAWEED SOAP**. I have been using this since April and all I can say is thank heavens for the Fijians and the person/s that brought it to Aussie. I haven't had to moisturise my legs (even after shaving) and my skin is still firmly attached to all digits and hands. I strongly recommend this product to any person working full time outside, as you won't believe the difference. One thing I must say is don't use on your face until the soap softens a little, it can be a little harsh.

**J Harvie,**

**CMB BLOOMSBURY 4799.**

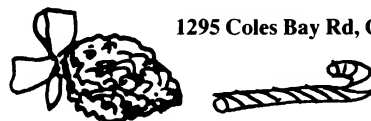
**Dear GRs/D Smith,**

In reply to GR 133, my daughter had **REFLUX** for years. It is caused by the sphincter muscle at the top of the stomach not being strong enough to hold the contents of the stomach down. A cough, hiccup, or nothing at all, was enough to trigger it, any time of day/night. Frequent small feeds and some medication to help the stomach to digest the food quicker (forget what it's called) have strengthened the muscle so that it no longer happens. But she did not finally grow out of it until she was about six years old.

TD Walsh, GR 133: I have had a high learning curve with my **GAS FRIDGE** recently. It used three weeks worth of gas in one day when it wouldn't burn properly, and it would not stop defrosting, even though it was on. I found that it was because the flue was dirty – but nowhere in the Arcticold instructions does it say anything about cleaning the flue. It was only after lengthy phone conversations with a gas fitter who had changed jobs, that I found out about a wire which is hooked into the top of the square part of the flue. It is necessary to jiggle this, many times, to clean the flue, and use something fine to clean the brass jet. Everyone else had just said 'nothing much goes wrong with gas fridges'. As though I must have forgotten to get more gas! I will be interested to read any other replies you get, as I feel sure the learning curve has not finished yet.

**J McRae,**

**1295 Coles Bay Rd, COLES BAY 7215.**



**Dear GR,**

I read in one copy that **EUCALYPTUS OIL** is good for removing chewing gum. Will you please let me know how to apply the eucalyptus oil, in what quantity, and how to remove the chewing gum once the eucalyptus oil has been applied. I asked for some eucalyptus oil in a chemist's shop but they do not sell it. I would probably have to ask you to send me some. Furthermore, I know that honey has got some healing properties (if properties is the right word) in it, and a young lady who had scratches on her face applied some after I told her the honey could do her face good, which it did, it healed her skin. I apply it to any minor cuts I get from time to time. Have you got a GR copy containing anything about the application of honey for healing?

**Frank Evans,**

**52 Kipling Dr, Enderby, Leicester  
LE9 5QQ, GREAT BRITAIN.**

**Good Afternoon,**

We are looking for info on how to **DISTIL OILS FROM PLANTS** etc, and if there are any devices, kits, etc for sale, and if so, from whom? We are also looking for someone who may have essential oils and fragrances and perhaps plant material from indigenous Australian bush plants/flowers etc. Any info would be helpful, as we can find zilch on this.

**John Treagus,**

**email: JTreagus@vitgcb3.telstra.com.au**

*Please send a snailmail address as well, as many readers do not have email facilities.*



# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GRs,

In the Dec, 98/Jan, 99 GR issue, there were several letters in the Feedback section asking for ideas on home schooling and educating children while travelling the country. Not many people seem to be aware that you can **HOME EDUCATE** your children without having formal qualifications or expertise. States and territories differ on the legal aspects, and there are the families that just go ahead and do it. Being that there are plenty of home-educating families across Australia, your best bet is to contact a few in your area/state, and they can fill you in on your options to go about starting. I have yet to meet two home-educating families that do things the same way, so of course there are various ways of fulfilling educational requirements. The publication *Growing Without Schooling* is especially good for those who are interested in natural learning (unstructured approach of integrating concepts and skills in life situations). There are many prepared curriculums that can be purchased, as well as correspondence courses (I do not include the public school system here). I put together my own, looking at what subject matter, concepts and skills we wanted to cover (a curriculum manual that gives a rough idea of skills and concepts age-appropriately is an excellent start!). The hardest parts of home schooling are dealing with education departments and overcoming your own lack of self-confidence. But, rest assured that even though you may not be 'degree-d' or possess the knowledge yourself, with your parent-student ratio, your commitment, love, care and concern for your child, you will do a fine job. Research has shown that home-educated children generally surpass the level of the public education system expectations, and further, are more well adjusted, socially healthy adults.

M Gale,

8 George St, FAIRY MEADOW 2519.

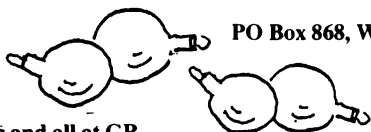
Email: masbgale@bigpond.com.au

Dear Grass Roots,

I have only recently been introduced to your magazine through a competition win in another publication. I must congratulate you on a truly terrific publication, which has not remained closed for a full day in the fortnight since I received it. My husband and I are starting our married life in a small country town, but are looking forward with anticipation and excitement to the days when we are in a position to 'turn feral'. I'm sure that between now and such time I will build up a really useful resource library thanks to GR magazine. In the meantime we are keen to obtain some information on the building and advantages of **STRAW BALE HOUSES**. Could anyone please advise me on some relevant reading material to purchase, as I have been caught out before in buying expensive books only to find out that they do not contain the 'brass tacks' of the subject.

Helen Sibley,

PO Box 868, WARRAGUL 3820.



Dear Megg and all at GR,

Regarding *Mother Earth News*: I buy mine locally at Shoalwater Newsagency, Shoalwater Shopping Centre 6169. There must be other newsagencies throughout this great country of ours that stock MEN. In the June-July issue, there were detailed plans for a log cabin. I would not recommend a cabin being built of treated pine, as this pine is highly poisonous. Regarding the building of **UNDERGROUND SHELTERS**: unless such shelters are on the inland side of coastal ranges or mountains they are a waste of time, effort and money. The occupants would drown in the event of tidal waves.

Ronda,

SAFETY BAY.

Letters are accepted and edited at the discretion of the publishers

Dear Grass Roots,

Do any readers know of an Australian native rainforest bush, **BANANA LEAF**? Nurseries have the variety of *Coronaria ervatamia*, fruitless, used as ground cover in temperate zones. Has white scented flowers resembling citrus flowers and grows three to five metres. A spreading bush with oval mid-green leaves. Several varieties exist from tropical to temperate zones in Queensland. I'm asking about the variety that bears small orange-yellow fruit in a banana-shaped pod. Is fruit edible? Can it be preserved? Was it used as bush tucker by the original Koories?

Jane,

PO Box 235, LAWSON 2783.



Dear GR,

**UNLEADED PETROL** has for many years been suspected of being more unhealthy than leaded petrol ever was but the 'expert' advisors from the petroleum industry have usually denied these 'crackpot greenie' warnings. However, fuel researchers in the USA now acknowledge that some of unleaded's compounds may be carcinogenic after studies on pathetic laboratory animals invariably produced cancer. One culprit is MTBE (methyl tertiary butyl ether) which is used in Australian unleaded petrol and seriously contaminates water supplies via faulty underground fuel storage tanks (rusting) and fuel pipes, fuel spills, road accidents, and general disregard of the environment. Where is the EPA? It makes you wonder how we got into this mess in the first place. Could the 'experts' have got the whole leaded/unleaded idea seriously wrong from the beginning? Japan is talking about going back to leaded petrol for obvious air pollution considerations.

In Australia we must find alternatives for land use, preferably in harmony with the environment. An ABC TV documentary named **ALIEN EMPIRE** (reference 6838) and filmed by BBC Bristol, showed how other societies and countries **USE EVEN INSECTS** to their advantage. Australia has probably more insects and insect species naturally than any other country and their uses are so diverse as to be in the thousands; everything from insect meal used as food for aqua farming to the production of silk, even as a component of pet food. Many insects are an expensive food delicacy for human consumption. Billions of dollars income is available each year to Australia and arable land is not required, nor are huge acreages. Salinity is not a problem or a byproduct and millions of dollars each year are saved of course on pesticides.

Roberino,

ARRAWARRA BEACH 2546.

Dear Megg & Co,

I enjoy the spirit of GR so here is my tip. I have had acne for 30 years. I tried a vitamin A preparation last year, which had diverse side effects and only improved my acne over six months. I have been using **EMU OIL** on my face for six weeks and three days and the benefits are enormous, and should get even better. I got a bad burn while cleaning the hot plate of my wood stove - not very deep, but I lost a big piece of skin. I am trying emu oil on that too, the edges are healing already after three days. The skin of my hands is so much better than usual for winter, no sign of chilblains either.

J McRae,

1295 Coles Bay Rd, COLES BAY 7215.

Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you for your magazine, much enjoyed. I am interested in **NATIVE STINGLESS BEES** to put in my garden. Could anyone inform me on where I could get some of these wonderful creatures, here in W Australia?

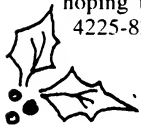
K Watson,

PO Box 158, BRUCE ROCK 6418.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

Dear GR,

Can you help me find some old friends of mine? **KIM GOULD** and her **HUSBAND IAN** moved from Wollongong to Northern NSW about 18 months ago. They are avid readers of GR, so I'm hoping they will read this. Kim, please contact me on 02-4225-8252.



**MD,  
WOLLONGONG.**

Dear GRs & Megg,

Finally, after 15 years of reading your top publication, I have decided to write to Feedback-Linkup. I look forward to the letters in each issue and find most of them very interesting to read. It's only over the past couple of years that I realise that I really haven't experienced much of interest in my life. I have always yearned to live a GR lifestyle, but haven't managed to divert from a mainstream lifestyle and this hasn't been a gain whatsoever. Although I was married and it broke up a few years ago, I should have had my own country GR patch, practising self-sufficiency and have a nice GR lady and two or three GR kids. This would be the ideal, but some of these things in life are hard to find. I would like to also construct my own alternative style house. I have stacks of ideas.

Has anyone got a recipe for a natural beauty cream that they could send me? And also a recipe for a real good furniture polish? I would like to also hear about any money making schemes one can do from home (only legal ones please). I have also over the past 4 to 5 years been putting together a book on 'schemes and scams' which I hope to publish, so anything to include in this would also be very much appreciated, along with your own personal experiences with these scams.

My work background is in mechanics, maintenance, engineering, handyman services, and for the past 20 years have been practising the Logan Method of Remedial and Relaxation Massage. I also do a lot of photography and story/article writing.

For quite some years I have been using a **HOMEMADE DESALINATOR** to clean up my drinking water supply. It leaves dam water tasteless, odourless and colourless. It even makes mains supplied water more acceptable. Look, I've even found that some town water supplies are worse than my available water. I've taken some of this and put it through the desalinator and people can't believe the end results, or that it is the same water. I will reply to all letters.

**Ian William,  
Box 283, BENALLA 3672.**

Dear Megg,

Quite a while ago you published an article in GR about an idea on how to design a vegetable garden. The idea was to divide the vegie garden into four sections where each individual section was at times accessible by chooks. Each section was planted and harvested in succession, allowing one section at any one time to rest and to be eaten empty and to be **CLEANED BY THE CHOOKS**. The chooks would clean up all seeds and weeds and fertilise the garden, thus reducing the amount of work required to run the vegie garden. I think this is a great idea! Could you please let me know in which issue you published this article? I should still have most issues published.

**Torsten Bazoche,  
email: lucky@kin.on.net**

*The article you are referring to was in GR 74. Indeed, it was quite a while ago – August 89. We prefer letters to be sent in the conventional way, rather than by email, however, if you do use email please include your postal address as well, as many GR people do not have email facilities.*

Grass Roots,

Do you have any info on growing nut trees? Brazil nuts, cashew nuts, hazel nuts, pecan and macadamia nuts, any other type of nuts. Also, where I can get coconut palms to grow? My farm is at Taree (NSW), good rainfall, no frost.

**Ross Minut,**

**7 Blackhead Rd, BLACKHEAD 2430.**

*Sounds like you need a copy of 'Growing Nuts in Australia', by Tony Allen. Available from: Grass Roots Publishing, PO Box 117, Seymour 3661. Price is \$28.45 incl postage.*

Hi Friends,

Re your Feedback in GR 133. Ms D Smith from Avenel asked for help with her **MENIERE'S DISEASE**. I was plagued with ringing in the ears till I found out that it is set off by zinc deficiency in the system. The rest was easy, zinc tablets fixed the problem. I hope this will be of help to D Smith and maybe a few others too.

**Hermann,**

**(of 'Magic') TURKEY BEACH 4678.**

Dear Readers,

I'm writing in reply to letters about **ECZEMA**. Four years ago we had a foster daughter who had eczema from top to toe. It was in saucer size all over, a real mess when the welfare brought her to us. Sophie was 10 at the time suffered from asthma, was totally stressed out and was a size 16-18 in clothes. Her old doctor had prescribed cortisone for the eczema. First thing we did was teach her how to eat properly and to do exercise, gently in the beginning. Her first night was a frightening one for her as she hadn't met the boys. All three turned up around the same time, all six foot of them.

I took her to our doctor who took her off the cream and said to take her swimming. So every night she went in the ocean and after getting home had a nice shower and used sorbolene. I washed her hair in the laundry sink with a natural shampoo. I also smothered really large eczema areas in zinc cream followed with vaseline, and wrapped it up every night. It took about six weeks to see a really good result on her body. For her face I used vitamin E capsules. She lost a lot of weight and when she returned to her mother was a size 10-12 and eczema free. We did take her weekly to the doctor who monitored her asthma and eczema. He's a big believer in the healing of the ocean. She also used an oat scrub, as we didn't have a bath.

Sophie still keeps up her cleaning with natural products and eats properly and walks to school rather than catching the bus. This worked with one it might help with other people.

To Berni Moolenschot: Email Factory here in SA grew a couple of **BANANA TREES** which produced fruit. The gardener wrapped the fruit up in heavy plastic to protect it. I believe it was edible. Adelaide does get a lot of frosts.



**Robyne Neal,**

**1 McKinnon Rd, GOOLWA 5214.**

Dear Grass Roots,

Thanks to all who answered my letter about **TEETH GRINDING**. I was advised that it was a calcium deficiency and that calcium could also help bed wetting – am certainly giving it a go. My girl has always had rainwater (often bought water) as a lot of mining towns advise not to give local water to under five-year-olds, so she's always missed out on town calcium supplies. The buzzer setup with the incontinence worked well. We did 10 weeks and had three 'accidents' since the beginning of April. Well done Kirsty. It was well worth the hire cost which is tax deductible. (Every little bit back helps).



**Karen Holmes,  
33 Bosley Street, GERALDTON 6530.**

Anonymous letters will not be published. Please indicate if you would like personal details to be withheld

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear Grass Roots,**

Thank you for your great magazine, it helps keep alive my dream of one day being self-sufficient. My partner and I are currently living in an old bus which we are slowly converting to a **MOTORHOME**, and would love to hear from any readers out there with ideas or advice (especially on solar power). At present we are stuck in a caravan park but would love to rent some land (preferably on the Central Coast) until we are finished the conversion (about 6 to 12 months) and can head off on our journey around Australia.

I would also love to hear from anyone who has successfully grown **VEGIES IN POTS** (organically if possible) as I don't seem to have much luck.

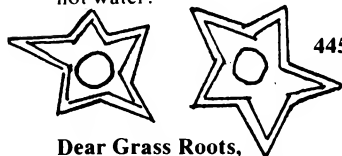
**Rachael Love,**  
205 The Round Frive, **AVOCA BEACH 2251.**

**Dear GR,**

Like many others we are heading out of the city to live in the country in the most beautiful countryside of **YACKANDANDAH**. We have purchased some land and hope to do our bit with mother nature. We need some information on where to buy some reasonably priced **PAULOWNIAS**, as we intend to grow them for future selling so we will need to grow at least 3000. Where can we purchase both seeds and treelets? Where can we get some information on propagation, growing and selling of these trees?

In one of your early magazines I read about a **WOOD BURNING HEATER** that can burn a load of wood for up to 13 hours. It was produced somewhere in Tasmania. I do not have this particular copy of the magazine so have no further information.

We would like to know: Where we can get one? Can you run hot water from it? What is the cost? Does anyone know of any other suitable wood burning heater that would heat a home and provide hot water?



**Mr A Neumann,**  
445 Wright Rd, **VALLEY VIEW 5093.**

**Dear Grass Roots,**

Thanks for a great magazine! I am wondering if anyone can give me their thoughts on buying a **RELOCATED HOME** (ie purchasing a house and then having it moved to a block of land). Is there much work required in repairing the house once it is moved? Any details would be greatly appreciated.

I am also wondering if anyone knows of short-term (1 to 2 month) **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES IN INDIA OR NEPAL**. I have high school teaching experience, permaculture background, and have worked with people with disabilities (especially mental illness). Once again, any information would be greatly appreciated.

**Kirsten Green,**  
2/54 Harper St, **WANGARATTA 3677.**

**Dear GR,**

We've been reading your publication for some years now and thought it about time to write in. Thanks for such a wealth of invaluable information in every issue! We have just placed an ad in GR 135 as we are now ready to purchase a block of land and begin realising our dream of self-sufficiency. We currently grow as much of our own food as our small city backyard allows, but we are more than ready to spread out on our own block! We are looking in the **NORTHERN RIVERS AREA** of north-eastern NSW, so if anyone out there knows of anything please drop us a line! I am also very interested in a plant called **stevia** (genus name); is anyone growing or using it? Any info appreciated. Thanks again for a great magazine - keep up the great work!

**Helly & Deni,**  
3/26 Jones St, **HIGHGATE HILL 4101.**  
*There was an article about stevia in GR 129.*

**Dear Megg & Staff,**

After 40 years farming in the South Burnett district of Queensland I retired to the south coast in Queensland. Here I pursued my hobby of gardening and growing trees using organic methods. Your magazine has been of great help for me to learn many ways to control pests without using chemicals. I congratulate you and your staff on 26 years of service to the people who read the mag. Feedback is a great help to the community. I have **BACK COPIES OF GR** from number 26 in 1981 up to number 132 (both inclusive) for anyone who would like them. Cost is \$1 per copy plus postage.

**WA Scudamore-Smith,**  
106 Point O'Halloran Rd, **VICTORIA POINT 4165.**

**Dear Megg & Mary,**

I was really interested to read the small article 'family endurance test - the ultimate self-sufficiency' which was seeking people to participate in the **PROJECT RESEARCH 2000 EXPERIMENT** in the Kimberley Region of WA. Although I would love to be part of this social science experiment my current commitments prevent me from doing so. However, it would be extremely interesting if GR could keep its readership informed of its progress.

I once read an article in Dick Smith's, *Australian Geographic*, about a couple who were given limited shelter and provisions to live in the Tasmanian Wilderness for 12 months. This article was extremely interesting, informative and inspirational. A similar article could provide readers like myself with valuable life and self-sufficiency skills. Perhaps a successful participant could provide the articles for you.

**Allison Miller,**  
73 Kesters Rd, **PARAHILLS WEST 5096.**

**Dear GR Readers,**

I am hoping someone can help me introduce my boys to the pleasures of **SILKWORM BREEDING**. If anyone has any spare eggs please can we have some? Also, I had a great plant that I think was called salad mallow, it replaced salad greens and was drought resistant. Spare seeds would be appreciated. Lastly, I'm looking for a second-hand, hand-operated (or patterns on how to make) lapidary machine.



**J Dwyer,**  
PO Box 65, **KUTTABUL 4741.**

**Dear GR Readers,**

I'm returning to the fold of GR reading and am happy to be consulting such a wise group of readers. I am writing to inquire about any folks who may live in the beautiful **BROKEN HILL DISTRICT**. I'd really like to correspond with those who could give me a bit of an insight into living, work and business opportunities which exist. I am 28 years old, and a primary school teacher. My partner, 29, has a certificate in horticulture and has had wide experience.

**Vanessa Harries,**  
5/1 Prospect Rd, **SUMMER HILL 2130.**  
e-mail: [harries71@hotmail.com](mailto:harries71@hotmail.com).

**Dear Grass Roots & Readers,**

I have got lots of **HIBISCUS SPINACH SEEDS** and **ITALIAN PARSLEY SEEDS** if anybody would like some. Please send an SAE and a 45 cent stamp to receive some. If you have any unusual seeds I would love a sample please. Has anybody got seeds of celeriac, Hamburg parsley (the one that has a big parsnip type root that you can eat), bergamot or unusual wattle (acacia) tree seeds? I will send SAE if you have, thanks.

Also I wrote a letter in the last issue requesting info on **MOZZIE ZAPPERS** and gave no address. Please reply to:

**Jodie,**  
215 Gan Gan Rd, **BOATHARBOUR 2316.**

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

**Dear Megg & Team,**

Thank you for all your time and energy with such an inspiring and positive magazine. I always feel cheered up by the stories from fellow readers and stories of your pets. The mag has helped me find the courage to step out on my own with my children and we're doing so well that we have saved enough for a caravan. I feel like these are the good years and here we are right now living happily. I hope you can find the space to print my letter this side of Christmas. This could be the cherry on top for us.

We grow some of our food and our guinea pigs are in charge of mowing and fertilising. We are certainly nowhere near self-sufficient but are becoming quite self-reliant and we are starting to take little trips with our new caravan.

But I'm writing to ask for help. We have no extended family at all, so when birthdays, Easter and Christmas come along it's still just me and the three children. It is these times of year when our friends and neighbours all go and visit their relatives that I feel most isolated. Although we are a very tight unit, I still wish we had more. Is there a GR family or couple nearby (Brisbane to Gympie) who could **ADOPT US THROUGH FRIENDSHIP** and love my beautiful children (aged 10, 4 & 2)? Perhaps you grow things or sew things or make stuff like we do. Do you have some time/space for my little bunch of lovelies? Could you take us fishing? Hoping to hear from genuine folk.

**Lacey and Three,  
4 Marble Street, KEPERRA 4054.**

**Dear GR Readers,**

My father has **SUGAR DIABETES** and has a very sweet tooth. I have had a lot of trouble finding substitutes for sugar when cooking. I would appreciate it if anyone could enlighten me on substitutes and recipes, especially for sweets, jams and preserves.

Also, my husband would like to know if anyone has found the solution to getting the **CLAYEY WATER CLEAR** in a newly built dam without using chemicals. Any feedback would be greatly appreciated.

**Linda Moore,  
77 Cricket Rd, REGENCY DOWNS 4341.**

**Dear GRs,**

I'm seeking others with **POLYMYALGIA RHEUMATICA** for support group, extra knowledge, and sympathy.

**Vivienne,  
PO Box 171, DORRIGO 2453.**

**Dear GRs,**

Next year (2000), I anticipate an **AROUND AUSTRALIA TRIP**, which includes much off-road. It would be rewarding and pleasurable to meet fellow GRs, Christians and identity folk en route. There are many interesting spots, some of which are known only to locals, including honest motor mechanics. I would like to hear of these, as well as local events and when they take place. Please do write. As Jack-of-all trades and master of none, I can lend a hand where possible, not expecting remuneration. Cheers and thanks.



**Natt,  
PO Box 32, CHILDERS, 4660.**

**Dear Readers,**

I need to drive to **TOWNSVILLE FROM TASMANIA** ASAP and would like to know if there is anyone who would be wanting to travel north who may like to be driven and pay toward petrol costs. Including anyone from Tassie who may want to go over by the Spirit of Tasmania and is female. We could share a room on board. I have just made contact one month ago with my first born son who I was forced to adopt out when young and we are very anxious to see each other for the first time. Also, anyone on the way up who wouldn't mind my staying overnight to sleep if I need, for safety. I will be sleeping in my car, which is suitable. Thank you.

**Gypsy, email: gypsyj@telstra.easymail.com.au  
Ph: 03-6260-4521.**

**Dear Grassrooters,**

Is there anyone who needs a place to stay over the Christmas, New Year break in the hills of Perth, only 40 minutes drive to the city? My husband and I will be in Queensland and need a **HOUSE-SITTER** for three weeks. Set on a lovely five-acre bush block and we have a dog, a budgie and two chickens, as well as a veggie garden. Any enquiries ASAP please. Also, we want to build a **STRAW BALE HOUSE** and would love to talk with and visit if possible someone who has done just this to find out the pros and cons, limitations and council requirements. My phone number is 08-9295-0005. Also, at my place of work we have piles of **WOOD FROM PALLETS** etc and want to give it away to anybody willing to take it.

I have found the book, **'THE AUSTRALIAN FOOD ALLERGY COOKBOOK'**, by Janelle Chant among others, to be very good for anybody wanting alternative recipes. Published by Sun Books, Macmillan. I have a recipe for preserving ginger in the Japanese style and also for crystallising fruit so I imagine it would work the same way. I will send it to the reader who requested it in the last issue.

**Anne-Marie Keightley,  
1645 Stoneville Rd, MUNDARING 6073.**

**Dear GR,**

My sympathy goes to D Smith (GR 133). **MENIERE'S DISEASE** takes away quality of life (as do many diseases). There are many ways to help control and ward off attacks. Fluid retention remedies and nerve calming are ideal. Diet control with no salt, no alcohol, no caffeine. Herbal remedies such as St Johns wort help the nervous system. Unfortunately, nothing cures this syndrome and if the attacks are frequent and life destroying, the last resort is surgery. A shunt is put in place to help the body remove some of the fluid in the inner ear which controls balance. This is a serious operation. I have dealt with the wrong and eventually the right surgeon. I do not know the statistics, but I am one that through surgery, done properly, has regained a life with not even one attack in 10 years.

**Lisbeth Cock,  
Bellaview Road, FLAGSTAFF HILL 5159.**

**Dear Sir,**

Last grape harvest a friend and I attempted to make some red wine from grapes left after a machine harvester had picked the vines. We made a pretty rough job but it will be drinkable. We intend to have another go next year, having learnt a lot this year.

We are doing it 'on the cheap' and knowing your magazine for its 'down to earth' simple approaches to things, I was wondering if you had any articles on machinery and methods etc on wine making that may improve the efficacy and efficiency of our **WINE MAKING**.

**Greg Illman,  
34 Lloyd-Jones Dr, SINGLETON HEIGHTS 2330**

**Dear Grass Roots,**

Thanks for such a great magazine. I wonder if someone can help. I am looking for information on **MILLING OUT** renewable resource **TIMBER**. I have 150 acres of timber. It seems crazy to buy it when I have so much. Any info on viability, type of mill, how to mill etc will be gratefully appreciated. Also, any ideas on what can be done on 150 acre bush block near Chinchilla Qld to make a living?

**Glen Willie,  
29 Eighteenth Ave, BRIGHTON 4017.**

**Dear GR Readers,**

My dream has always been to work as an **AID VOLUNTEER** in the developing world somewhere. I was born in Namibia, and will have the opportunity to volunteer in Africa quite soon. I have finished an ecology degree and have experience in organic farming and bush regeneration. I was wondering if any of you out there know of anyone (except the Overseas Service Bureau) who can place me in a volunteer position in Africa. Any correspondence would be greatly appreciated, in any area - permaculture, farming, teaching, building, etc. Thank you.

**Matt Taylor,  
182 Joseph Banks Dr, KINGS LANGLEY 2147.  
Email: <floogles@yahoo.com>**



# KIDS PAGE



## the garden

### creations from the garden

Create a collage made up of objects collected from the garden. Your work can be a picture, a pattern or representative of a theme such as autumn or spring.

**You will need:**

anything that can be stuck - leaves, seeds, dirt, bark, stones, feather . . .

PVA glue (it dries clear)

brush for glue

thick paper or board

frame for special masterpieces

Stick and create as your heart desires! When you have a fantastic design finished and the glue is dry you could place a wooden frame around it, or paste it on to a slightly larger piece of heavy cardboard which will act as a frame. You can make super collages to give to family and friends as Christmas or birthday gifts.

### EATING THE GARDEN

Two of the yummiest ways to enjoy the bounty of edible gardening are savoury vegetable salads and sweet fruit salads. You can put any combinations of ingredients together for these depending on what you have available. Here are a few ideas for snazzy salads.

#### • Salad Baskets

Sweet - cut an orange in half and scoop out the flesh. Fill with fruit salad.

Savoury - Cut a tomato or baked potato in half and scoop out the flesh. Fill with any vegie salad.

#### • Colour Combos

Make a salad/fruit salad using same colour ingredients such as red.

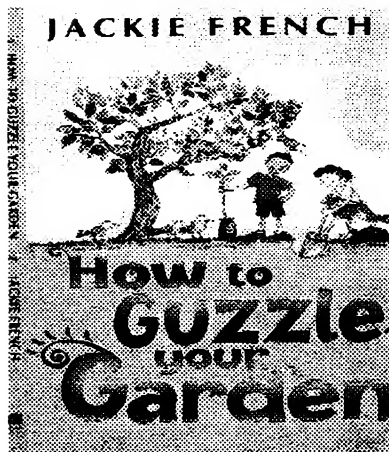
Sweet - strawberries, raspberries, watermelon, rhubarb, cherries, tamarillo.

Savoury - tomatoes, red pepper, sundried tomatoes, radish.

#### • Flower Surprises

There are a range of beautiful flowers that you can eat. Add a handful of these to your savoury or sweet salads: nasturtiums, borage, lavender, violets (not African violets). Make sure the flowers have not been sprayed while in the garden and only use these flowers listed - many types of flowers are definitely not edible and can really hurt you. Always ask an adult first.

### BOOK REVIEW



## How to Guzzle your Garden

by Jackie French

kids to develop an edible garden. Jackie French shows how quick, easy, economical and fun it can be to grow yummy and healthy fruit and vegetables. Written in the amusing and energetic style characteristic of the author's books for children.

This is a book to inspire and guide

Angus and Robertson/Harper Collins, PO Box 321,  
Pymble 2073. RRP \$12.95, p/b, 124pp.



### ALL SORTS OF GARDENS

Edible gardens are a fantastic aspect of gardening. Remember too that there are many other reasons for gardening. Consider creating gardens that:



attract birds



produce beautiful flowers



smell divine



your cat will love to lie in



are secret fairy places



# IN THE KITCHEN

Some years ago (in the Dec/Jan '92 - '93 issue) the then-staff of GR shared recipes for their favourite festive fare with readers. With a few new staff members joining us in recent months, we thought it an ideal time to do the same again. Enjoy!

## MEDITERRANEAN LOAF

This savoury bread is terrific served straight from the oven with drinks, or to complement your Christmas menu.

1/2 cup chopped black olives, pecans and blanched almonds

1/4 cup macadamia nuts

2 eggs

1 1/2 cups buttermilk

1 onion, chopped

90 g melted butter

1 cup self-raising flour

1/2 cup plain flour

1 cup wholemeal plain flour

1 tsp bicarb soda

Gather together olives, buttermilk, and eggs, beat until combined. Fry onion and butter until onion becomes soft, add assorted nuts and stir constantly over heat. Remove from heat. Sift flour and bicarb soda, then add nuts and buttermilk mixture, mix until combined. Pour mixture into a greased loaf tin and bake for 55 minutes at 180°C.

Catherine

## SUMMER PUDDING

This is an old favourite and a great way of using up some old bread while making a delicious pudding with those beautiful summer berries. It's best to use the juicy red berries (so forget strawberries), rather than black ones if you want a lovely crimson juice.

1 loaf thinly sliced bread, remove crusts

1 cup water

250 g sugar

700 g raspberries

300 g redcurrants, remove stalks

250 g loganberries or mulberries

Line the bottom and sides of a 2-litre basin with sliced bread - ensure slices fit snugly so juice stays in the pudding. Reserve enough slices to make lid. Dissolve sugar in simmering water; add fruit, cover and bring back to boiling. Strain fruit through colander or muslin, reserve juice and allow fruit to cool. Fill bread-lined basin with enough fruit to reach rim. Add some of the reserved juice - just enough to wet fruit, keep the rest for serving. Cover

top with bread and place a double layer of foil over this. Press down a small plate that just fits inside rim of basin. Place basin on large, rimmed plate. Add weights to press down on pudding and refrigerate overnight, or for up to 2 days. To serve, remove weight, plate and foil. Place rimmed serving plate over pudding and invert carefully. Some juice should escape onto plate. Serve with thick cream and remaining juice. Serves 8.



## CURRY VEGETABLE PIE

A lovely light dish you can have with a side salad, perhaps for your Christmas dinner.

1/4 cup long grain rice

60 g butter, melted

1 egg, lightly beaten

1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1 onion, finely chopped

1 carrot, grated

1 zucchini, grated

1 small red capsicum, finely chopped

1 tsp curry powder

1/4 tsp turmeric powder

50 g broccoli florets

1/2 cup sour cream

1/2 cup milk

### Extra Ingredients

1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

2 lightly beaten eggs

1 tbsp butter

Steam rice, or boil and drain, then rinse with cold water. Combine rice, butter, 1 egg and Parmesan cheese, mix well. Press rice mixture ovenbase and up the sides of a greased 23 cm pie plate. Heat extra butter in saucepan, cook onion, carrot, zucchini, capsicum, curry powder and turmeric powder for approximately 3 minutes. Add broccoli to saucepan and cook for 2 minutes. Spoon mixture into rice base. Pour over combined sour cream, milk and extra Parmesan cheese with extra eggs. Cook in

moderate oven 180°C for 40 minutes or until set. Serve warm, cut into wedges.

Vicki & Vera

## PEAR AND PECAN SALAD

A light refreshing start to any summer meal; the sweetness of the pear is beautifully complemented by the tang of tarragon and the crispness of the mesclun. Those who find the taste of mesclun mixture too strong can substitute any milder flavoured lettuce.

1/2 pear per person

1 dsp chopped pecans per person

handful mesclun mixture per person

1 lge egg

2 tbsp caster sugar

100g thickened cream

3-4 tbsp tarragon vinegar (to taste)

First prepare the dressing (quantity above will serve 6). Beat egg and sugar well. Add vinegar. Place mixture in top of a saucepan over simmering water. Stir gently until mixture thickens. Leave to cool. Whip cream till thick. Fold into vinegar mixture. To serve, sit each pear half (rounded side up) in a bed of mesclun. Spoon dressing over and scatter chopped pecans on top.

Mary

## SPIRULINA FUDGE BROWNIES

Christmas is a perfect time for choc-oholics to indulge.

1 cup carob powder

250 g butter

1 cup honey

6 small eggs

2 tbsp real vanilla essence

1 tbsp spirulina

1 cup wholemeal flour

Cream softened butter, honey and eggs in either processor or large mixing bowl. Add vanilla and spirulina. Mix carob to a paste with purified water, then add carob and flour to other ingredients and mix well.

Spread in greased baking tray and bake at 180°C for 25 minutes.

(Mix carob with milk rather than water for a creamier taste)

Natalie

# CATCHING UP WITH COOKIE

by The Stock Camp Cook, Woombye, Qld.

**It's been a while since we heard from the stock camp cook and many readers have been asking about him. His world has changed, but he's still able to enjoy a peaceful down-to-earth lifestyle, even now he lives in a house with a washing machine. We endorse his sentiment that you don't 'need a farm to have a grassroots lifestyle, it's what's inside you that matters'. We know you'll enjoy, as we did, catching up with Cookie.**

Hello again to *Grass Roots* readers. For many years I sat on a flour drum near an open fire and watched the coals and dreamed dreams of having a garden and a washing machine. I lived and worked as 'Cookie' in stock camps and cattle stations in the NT and had a great love affair with endless night skies. I slept in my swag and bathed and did my washing by hand in flour drums. I cooked in camp ovens and, after boiling the canned meat in flour drums, threw the fatty boiling water over raked and clean soil where it dried and the fat sealed the soil and dust. Sprinkling washing and washing up water on this, followed by sweeping with a straw broom, made tidy clean (and cool under the tarp) dirt floors. From old-timers I learned the names of trees and flowers and how to tell what snake made what track in the dust.

Sometimes I would cook at station homesteads and because I had plenty of time to spare I would make vegie gardens and grow the most beautiful fresh vegies and flowers. I made deserts bloom. The millions of flies, the dust, the heat and at times loneliness of such a lifestyle were nothing compared to the rewards of no radio, no TV, no newspapers. Simple joys of watching sunrises and sunsets, of seeing birds and learning their names and songs were enough.

After working and cooking in huge international hotels, the food I cooked was plain simple meat and three vegies. I learned thousands of ways to cook red meat. In most camps there was a portable generator to run fridges and lights at night, although on one station in the Kimberleys I only had carbide lights.

I would rise at 4 to 4.30 stir my coals into flames and boil the billy for my predawn cuppa. Ah, such a simple life, and contentment was mine up until the mid 1990s, about 1996, when the changes became too much for me. So I left stations behind and moved on to other things.

Cattle stations are huge. A couple I worked on came close to 4000 square miles. Most are owned by big companies and are run from head office by fax machines and ISD telephones. Rural power reaches some, so the power plants sit idle. TV plays and station videos come and go. The young ringers turn up with their college degrees and want pizzas and fried chicken to eat. I have been told by them that they had never eaten so many fresh vegetables in their life, and why bother with a garden when the mail truck would bring fresh fruit and vegies once a week anyway?

The horses are being replaced by motorbikes and are mostly used now for rodeos, bush races and barrel races, and cattle are looked on as pure dollars. The young ringers are not keen on staying in stock camps unless there are hot showers and all the mod cons of today's life.

In spite of all the changes, I missed my nice quiet life in stock camps, so in 1998 I went back to it.

I was given a huge mobile kitchen with gas stove, etc, etc. How I hated cleaning it, and moving the damn thing miles and miles was a nightmare in itself. And there was an air conditioner! Which I refused to use and the young fellas, girls and guys, could only use it if I was miles away. Needless to say, the TV and video in the stock camp was the last straw for me and I left – never to go back.

I retired here to little old Woombye, in the hills behind the Sunshine Coast where I have a garden and a washing machine. Now I have a house I tend to view it as a place to eat and sleep. I spend all my days outside and, as it is a highset house, under the house with my garden and potted plants. I grow my own vegies and have fruit trees, pawpaws, bananas and passion fruit. I have made my vegie garden in polystyrene boxes from the local supermarket so I can move them around to catch the sun or

shade as needed. In them I grow beans, sugar peas, button squash, tomatoes, wong bok, pak choi, endive lettuce, spring onions, beetroot, silver beet, radish and squash. At the moment I have choko vines rambling around the place and a tree tomato that thinks it's a Jack and the beanstalk and grows and grows. I make use of newspapers, cardboard boxes and grass clippings for mulch. Oh, there are so many things I do to live my self-sufficient lifestyle. I carry gravel left over from council roadworks up the hill on my back and use it for mulch around the top of my pot plants, of which there are thousands. I do not let supermarkets give me plastic bags, rather I take my own bag. I only buy things that are not packaged in plastic. I shop for fresh fruit at organic shops. I make my own cakes or biscuits, jams, pickles and relishes. I barter fresh vegies for free range eggs. I can still sit down the backyard and boil the billy on my little open fire and have a cuppa and be at peace with this little bit of earth I call home. I have a few problems with my garden, snails for example. After stomping a million with my foot, I reckon I've got about 10 million more to go. I use no sprays for grubs. Grubs turn into butterflies and I would never harm a butterfly. I have rats and mice which come in from the very overgrown yard next door and the pineapple frames, but there are also carpet snakes which in turn eat them – at least carpet snakes are not deadly, unlike the browns, mulgas, king browns and inland taipans I lived with in stock camps.

I grow only organic nonhybrid seeds, or plants from slips and cuttings. I do all these things mostly without ever thinking because it's the way I live. People say, 'Oh Cookie you're old-fashioned!' But I sit by my little fire and have my early morning cuppa and enjoy the dawn and the early morning birds. Even though from my front door to the busy

old Bruce Highway is less than thirty metres, I know that Mary, my spoilt cattle dog, and my four ducks and I are all happy, healthy and safe in our garden, with a washing machine.

## COOKIE'S RECIPES

### Quick Relish

Into a saucepan with just enough water to cover the bottom put:

1 diced large onion

1 diced (same size), peeled, green apple

1 diced large chilli – remove the seeds if you do not want it hot

Put a lid on and cook it until the apple and onion are soft and pulpy. Great with cold pork.

### Pumpkin and Apricot Cake

1 cup butter or marg

2 cups brown sugar

3 eggs

3 cups SR flour

1 cup diced dried apricots

1 cup cold cooked pumpkin

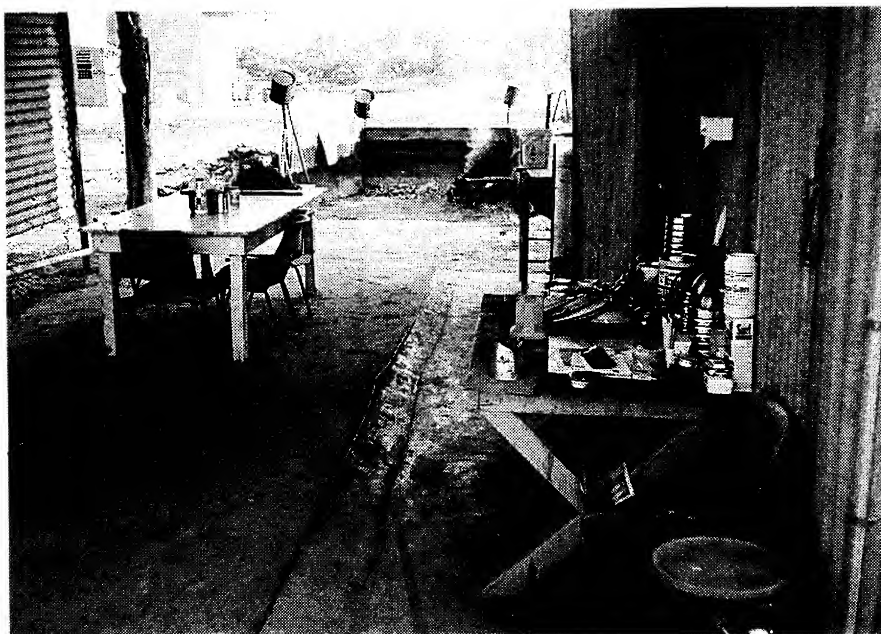
2 tsp cinnamon

Cream butter and sugar, add eggs one at a time, then flour and cinnamon. Lastly add apricots and pumpkin. If mixture is too dry, use orange juice to bring to cake moisture.

Cook in moderate oven till cake is golden and pulls away from sides of tin.

What I would like to say is that you do not need a farm to live a grassroots lifestyle, it's what inside you that matters.

Anyone can write to me or drop in for a cuppa if passing this way. Basil Montford, 6 Nambour Connection Rd, Woombye 4559.



The stock camp kitchen, above, in the dry outback is a far cry from Cookie's new home, below, in the Sunshine Coast Hinterland. Though the geography and climate are vastly different, Cookie still enjoys a simple self-sufficient lifestyle.



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# KOOKABURRA PARK REVISITED

by Tara Andre, Eudlo, Qld.

No one could predict the remarkable response to the previous article in GR 134 on this unique Queensland based eco-village. The Davies' phone continues to ring with enquiries. Barry found *Grass Roots* folk were asking questions around some common themes. This article sets out to answer those frequently asked questions.

## EARNING OPPORTUNITIES

There are opportunities already available within the village. With a steady stream of new residents arriving, there is a need for people with building skills. Alternatives such as solar passive technology, environmentally friendly products, organic food, and in fact any services or goods to enhance village life are required. Residents trade with each other and payment is either by cash or LETS.

For those who wish to earn from ecotourism, there is an urgent need for guest accommodation. A large dome community centre where courses can be run and educators will be in demand is soon to be built. A commercial area which offers access to the main road has been planned into the design. This land has been set aside for crops, nurseries and projects catering to tourists. In the Bundaberg area jobs are available for nurses, teachers, farm workers, tutors, computer experts, electricians and plumbers. The ability to create a living is limited only by the individual's imagination.

## SERVICES

Electricity, telephone and water are supplied to each allotment. Co-operative purchasing of food has been set up and there is delivery each day of milk, bread and pies. There are three available primary schools within a few kilometres and a high school within one kilo-

metre. The school bus picks up from and delivers children to door. Another bus stops outside Kookaburra morning and night to take residents to Bundaberg and deliver them home. To cater for sweet teeth an ice cream man calls. There is internet access and in fact a feature of Kookaburra is its focus on creating high-tech facilities for those wanting to set up home-based businesses.

## HOUSING STYLE

Like anywhere, houses must comply with local council regulations. There are no covenants, but residents tend to build homes that add beauty and character to the village. These are often timber with a leaning towards passive solar. Some residents plan to build with mud brick.

## TYPE OF RESIDENTS

By December 1999 approximately one hundred people, including children, called the village their home. Kookaburra is a true global village with residents coming from 16 different ethnic groups. The diversity of interests, occupations, talents and creativity is impressive, yet all share common interests and goals: a wish for

self-sufficiency, a healthy environment, and to live among like-minded people.

Occupations include single parents, teachers, a luxury yacht builder, inventors, artists, musicians, computer technicians, and even a rocket scientist. Some residents work overseas on a regular basis and see Kookaburra as a safe haven for their families.

## CHILDREN

Children are seen as one of the village's most important assets and as such are given priority. Thriving in this atmosphere of support, they have formed their own little group and keep busy exploring nature's playground. Most importantly, parents can safely let them roam free for hours without fear of 'stranger danger'. A phone check around enables a parent to quickly locate a child if required. The village system acts as a form of extended family and single parents enjoy the support of neighbours.

The wisdom of older residents, not usually available in our isolation-based society, is lovingly shared. Scholarships are planned to help children receive the right style of education when they reach high school and beyond.

## OLDER PEOPLE

With GR baby boomers moving towards retirement age, Kookaburra could be considered a viable option. Surrounded by like-minded people, knowledge and skills gained over the years would be valued rather than discounted as can happen in 'mainstream' Western society. Activities such as craft groups, shared meals, barbecues, meetings, working bees, co-ops, planning committees, birthday and special occasion parties ensure no one need feel isolated. Elderly residents are protected. Although a system is in place to allow them to stay as independent as possible, care is on hand when required.



Children have the advantage of learning from older residents. Tim Martin had a wealth of experience to pass on to Mariah.

## DIET

There are no rules about eating, religion or anything else. Residents are free to choose for themselves.

## PERMACULTURE

While the Park itself was initially designed using permaculture methods and some residents are using permaculture techniques, others develop their own properties as they wish. There is, however, encouragement to always use natural methods that care for earth and people and support sustainability. A group is being set up to help residents learn about permaculture practices and share resources.

## CLIMATE

People interested in self-sufficiency will be pleased to note that the climate is excellent for growing all year round. Foods grown include: banana, pawpaw, mango, citrus, custard apple, stone fruit, avocado, macadamia nut, pecan nut, most leafy vegetables, root crops and brassicas. In some areas of the Park there is little frost and in other areas no frost at all. Although this area once experienced very low rainfall, in more recent years this has changed. Average rainfall is quoted as being 1100 mm per year.

## DOGS AND CATS?

Sorry. The no-dogs, no-cats criteria has encouraged the return of fauna and residents are delighted that wallabies and kangaroos can safely raise their babies in the Park.

## SECURITY

Eighty-five year old Tim welcomed visitors with his regular comments of: 'Are you joining us? You should, you know, this place is heaven on earth.' Living with friends as neighbours creates a high level of security. With the increasing attacks on people, especially the elderly, in other areas of Australia, the Village could well be considered heaven. Being able to sleep safe and enjoy walking the streets of the Village night or day is an advantage few people can now enjoy.

## GOALS

The main focus of Kookaburra is to be an example of sustainable human habitation, to show by example that humans can live in harmony with nature while enjoying a happy and fulfilling life.

## MORE INFORMATION

Visit Kookaburra's web site at [www.sunweb.net/kooka/welcome](http://www.sunweb.net/kooka/welcome). This site is filled with information and photos on the Village.

Grant and Jean Davies even invite you on a virtual tour of their home. One-acre blocks can be purchased freehold at only \$30,000 and \$35,000. If you wish to visit Kookaburra, accommodation is available from only \$20 per night. For more information contact Barry Davies. Ph: 07-4157-2850, fax: 07-4153-1358. Email: [Kookaburra@sunweb.net](mailto:Kookaburra@sunweb.net)

*As this article was being prepared for publication we were informed of the death of Tim Martin. We extend our condolences to his friends and family. He was happy and active up to the last day.*



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# THE BEE STING

by John Hodgkinson, Deer Vale, NSW.

A bee sting must rank with that of the blue bottle and the gympie bush as about the most painful thing inflicted by a natural organism. Few insects are as feared. To my mind the pain of a bee sting is more extreme than that of a wasp or a bull ant. The sheer intensity of pain is greater, as well as its duration. Depending on how delayed is the removal of the sting from one's skin, the duration of the pain can be longer still.

Bee venom is not simply a single organic compound. There are around eleven distinct toxins. This is why allergic reactions to bee stings are so common and often so severe. Most people have either a severe initial reaction to a bee sting or one which builds in intensity with subsequent stings.

So what makes bees sting? Firstly, their breeding. I have seen European honey bees (as opposed to the stingless Australian natives) which were so aggressive that they appeared to possess genes from the dreaded African bee. I have also seen such bees so quiet that one would have to actively antagonise them to receive a sting. The quietest bees I have ever seen were colonies of the Caucasian strain of European bee, quite grey in colour with some black banding. Their queens had been carefully bred over generations for docility and productivity.

Weather conditions play an important role in stinging behaviour. During windy, cold or wet weather and at night, they are more aggressive. The best weather for manipulating bee hives is warm, calm and sunny. I have on occasion had no option but to work bees in adverse weather, and it can be mighty painful. Of course it is possible to wear so much protective gear that no sting can penetrate to your skin. Spare a thought for all the bees that leave their stings behind, embedded in your overalls, felt hat, gloves and leggings. They all die later.

The availability of pollen, and particularly nectar, is another important factor in stinging behaviour. The best time to work colonies is when a flow of nectar is in progress. A scarcity of nectar means that bees will be tense and usually

aggressive. To make matters worse, when working a number of colonies near one another during a dearth of nectar, one finds that robbing soon sets in. Foragers from the other hives descend upon the one being manipulated and soon there is a riot in progress, with the human a prime stinging target. Opening all hives together at the outset or feeding them all sugar syrup are the only ways to head off this situation.

So what is the role of smoke in all this? Every beekeeper uses a smoker, apparently to subdue the stinging impulse. Firstly, it cloaks the attack pheromone secreted by the guard caste and in turn by adult workers when the hive is opened. In this way smoke prevents or at least retards the spread of aggressive behaviour throughout the hive. Nevertheless, in the case of a wild colony, no amount of smoke will quell the bees – they seek out and sting anyone nearby. Secondly, the smoke triggers a survival response in all the castes, except the queen and drones, to fill their abdomens with honey in the face of calamity (the burning of the hive). Once their abdomens are full they are unable to bend themselves sufficiently to insert their sting in your flesh.

This is why bees in a swarm do not usually sting. When bees swarm, to ensure the successful establishment of a new colony, they gorge themselves on honey before flying out of the mother

hive. Thus, capturing a swarm is something that can be done without a veil and even without smoke.

Another factor behind bees stinging is rather difficult to quantify. It is their reaction to a person's mental or emotional state. I am satisfied that bees know when someone is afraid of them or even apprehensive towards them. I have seen the same colony respond quite differently to different people: calmly towards the experienced person but aggressively towards the nervous rookie. Admittedly, bees tend to attack people with alcohol on their breath, those with the smell of petrol or diesel on their hands or clothing, and particularly dogs and horses.

It is almost always the case that old neglected hives have the most aggressive bees. This is where the expression, 'They met me at the gate,' originated. A truly wild hive will send out guards to sting a person from a range of up to 150 metres. This aggressiveness results from the tendency of a neglected colony to naturally select its queens each year for aggressive behaviour. This is based on the fact that such colonies usually swarm each spring. This means that the old queen and a large part of the colony engage in 'colony reproduction' by leaving to set up in a new location. They leave behind new queens and lots of brood to carry on the old colony. As the queens hatch, the most aggressive kills the others, mates, and proceeds to mother thousands of her own progeny. Her worker offspring will inherit her initial aggressiveness. It may not be true that aggressive bees are good foragers, however, so there is really no gain in keeping angry colonies except to ward off daytime intruders.

Bee stings, or rather the venom in bee stings, have been regarded as a specific in treatment of rheumatic complaints in folk medicine. In Russia it was believed that people who kept bees and therefore presumably received frequent doses of bee venom, never suffered from arthritis or cancer. I believed this until I met Australian beekeepers who had serious arthritis.



Personally, I am wary of receiving too many stings in one day. Because I prefer to work hives without gloves, with sleeves rolled up, and in single layer clothing, I am prepared to be stung – not around the head however. I find that after 20 or 30 stings I feel light in the head and my heartbeat becomes irregular. This is gone overnight and there seem to be no other effects. The main precaution to take against receiving an overly large dose of venom is to remove the sting as quickly as possible. This ensures that the venom sac is not fully emptied into one's skin via the sting barb. The barb and sac are torn out of the bee when it impales its sting in human skin.

The allergic reaction suffered by many people is not to be taken lightly. People who suffer an increasingly severe reaction with each new sting may reach the point where their reaction is life threatening. The vicious circle of this reaction can sometimes be reversed by a doctor administering graduated doses of venom over an extended period of time to trigger an opposite, accommodating reaction, similar to a proper immune response.

As a precaution against employees or bystanders suffering a serious sting reaction I always carried the antihistamine, Phenergin, in tablet form. An assistant of mine was careless on one occasion to the extent that he received a dozen or so stings around his throat through a gap under his veil. The swelling was so bad that he began to experience breathing difficulty. Fortunately, I was able to administer an antihistamine and avoided having to carry out a tracheotomy on him with my trusty pocket knife – we were at least an hour from the nearest doctor or hospital.

Just to emphasise the seriousness of this allergy situation, I found it necessary to consider public liability cover for my migratory operations. After considering the possible outcome of a stinging on a person who might sue for damages, I took out \$2 million of insurance. Fortunately, I never made a claim, but this shows how serious bee stings can be, right down to a beekeepers's liability for damages.

And on what part of the anatomy is it most painful to receive a sting? I think it is a close contest between the penis, the finger tips and the top lip. And the least

painful places: the back of the hand, the forearm or the lower leg. In balance though, I adopt the philosophy that the products and the benefits of bees far outweigh the pain they inflict. In any case, stings are largely avoidable provided precautions are observed and good hive management practices are carried out.

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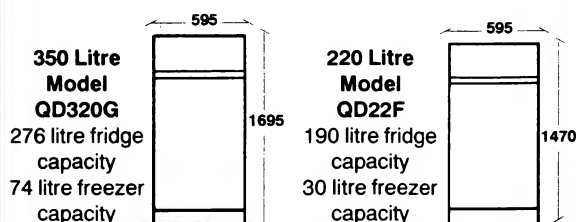
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# BUILD YOURSELF A HOMEMADE BARBECUE OVEN

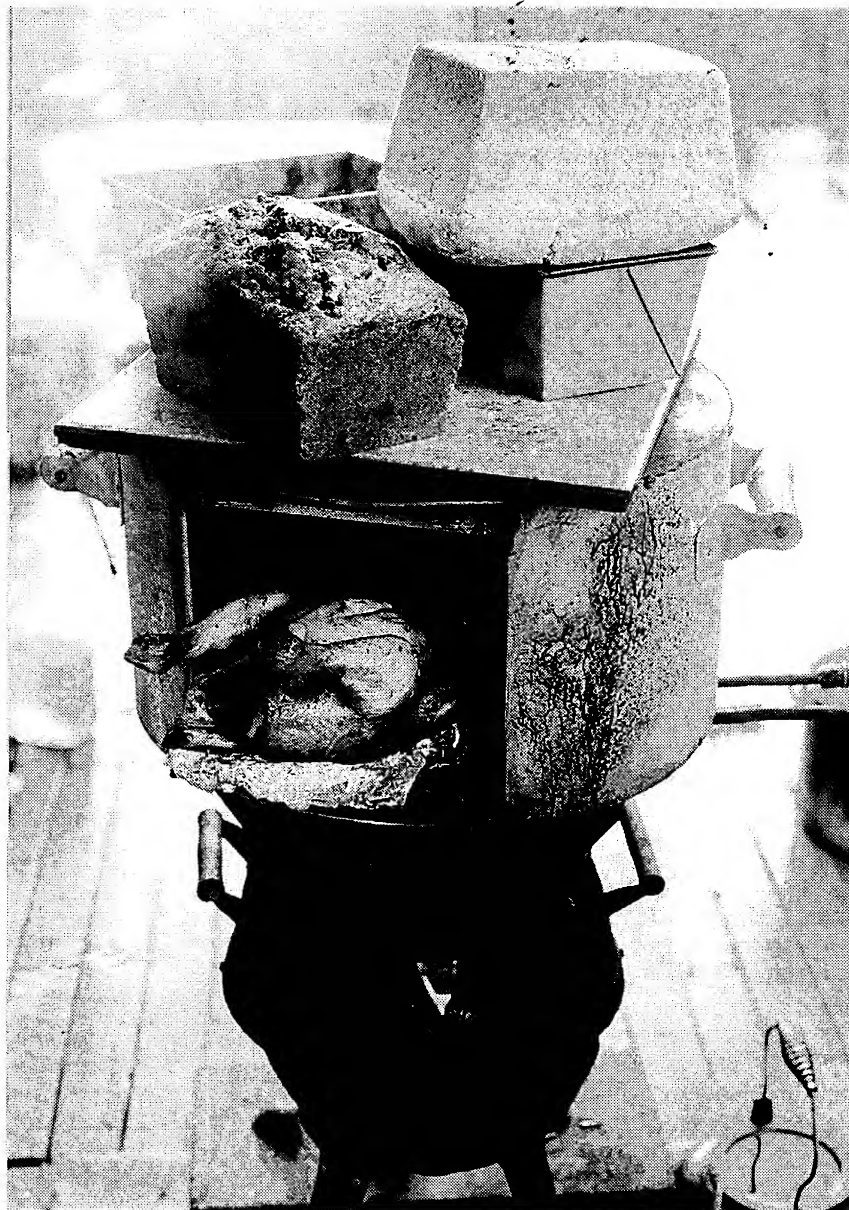
by Trevor Wilkins, Russell Island, Qld.

For just a few dollars and a few hours in your home workshop this easily constructed stove/oven will improve your lifestyle, and reduce your food bill – no matter where you live. It is easily built using ordinary hand tools and is designed to sit atop commonly available braziers, Habachis, and Webber-style charcoal barbecues. As a stove it will cook anything that we need to sustain life: fresh bread, cakes, pizzas, fried eggs, roasts – better than ever. And even in power blackouts, world depressions, recessions, or Y2K type emergencies – this stove/oven will still run you a piping hot bath.

The stove in the pictures is a made-in-China Habachi stove which I bought at Brisbane's Barbecue's Galore Woolongabba store. The cost – only \$39. Of course, the oven is extra; add another \$20 for materials.

Ceramic cook-tops, I am told, are all the rage this year in yuppie-dom, and of course this stove has its very own unique ceramic top that cooks eggs, bacon, fried cheese, sausages, omelettes, and flat-breads to perfection. Yep, you guessed it . . . it is nothing more fancy than a glazed ceramic floor tile – and it works fine and costs just cents. It also doubles as a damper by blocking or unblocking the draught vent. Don't know what a draught vent is? Read on . . .

I learnt the wood-stove/room-heater trade many years ago while completing a five-year plumbing/roofing apprenticeship and I can say that this fun little stove is the most efficient that I have ever used. It is surprisingly light, comes in pieces packed in a cardboard box, and is beautifully made from quality cast iron. Properly used it should last for a lifetime. My new (patent applied) barbecue stove/oven invention just sits on top and makes this stove even more fuel efficient. It will bake a loaf of bread in around 30 minutes, just from burning a few pine cones and sticks of forest waste. If you already own a charcoal burning Webber-style barbecue, you can build this oven to fit it and then it will bake great pizzas,



Trev's barbecue oven/hotwater system bakes bread, cakes, biscuits and pizzas and can, also roast a chook to perfection.

bread and cakes, even while the chops are cooking underneath. Cakes take about 45 minutes to cook in my oven and roasts just over an hour, depending of course if you like them rare or well done. Crackling on pork and chicken is easily achieved from bursts of super-

heat after adding handfuls of well-dried gum leaves to the firebox and then fully opening the draught control.

## FUELS

Eucalyptus trees are my favourite fuel source as they drop many small sticks.

I saw these into 200 mm long sections to fit the firebox. A two-litre ice cream carton filled with such mini-logs is all that is needed to bake a loaf of bread. The 25 mm diameter handles on the oven pictured are made from these very same mini-logs. A classy touch would be to fashion the handle brackets from sheet brass.

Well-dried pine cones are great fire starters. With a match or lighter I light a couple of crumpled sheets of (non-coloured) newspaper and place them in the firebox, allowing room for air to cause a healthy up-draught. I then top them with some pine cones and a few dry twigs or leaves. Then I pop on a few mini-logs and place the oven on top of the firebox. At this stage it is important to make sure the top vent is fully open to continue the up-draught. The fire can then be stoked and fed from the door at the front of the firebox. Temperature control is relative to oxygen/airflow over coals and flame and is easily learned with practice.

Reduce the airflow by closing either the top vent or the firebox door. Too much heat too quickly will produce bread, cakes and roasts that are overcooked on the outside and undercooked in the centre.

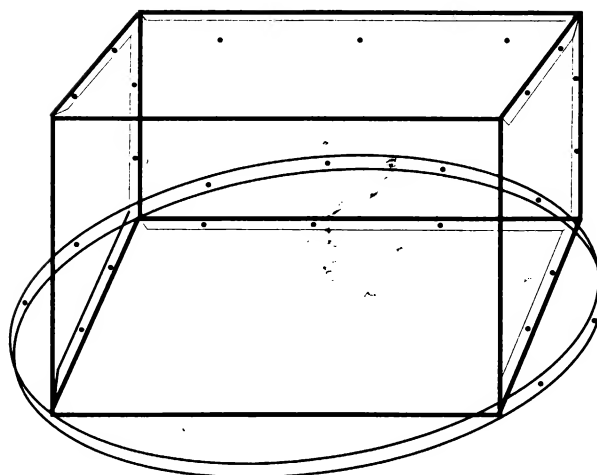
I collect my pine cones and forest waste daily, storing them in airy dry places so that even during the rainy season I can still have fresh smoky bread each morning.

I find the aroma of eucalyptus smoke permeating through both air and food is absolutely delicious. Pine cones are also great to cook with and, once again, they are totally free (and poison free) courtesy of Mother Nature.

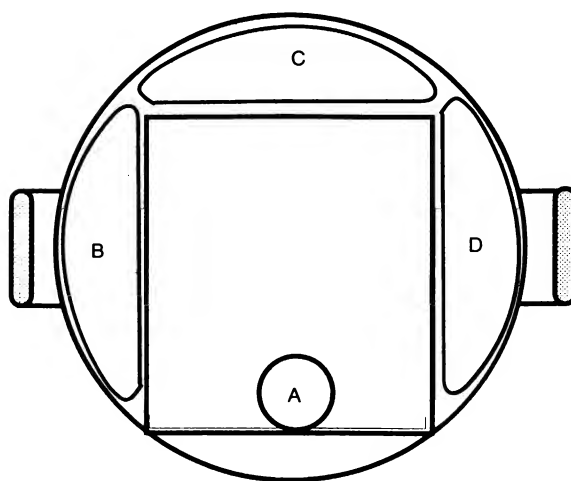
As food in the oven is open to the fire, you should never use wood covered with paint or treated with preservatives. And remember that the ink in coloured paper is also poisonous. A few things that give smoked food a less than pleasant flavour and should never be burnt in the firebox include cigarette butts, plastic, bones and eggshells. For this reason the wood and leaves of the wattle tree are also not recommended.

The oven can be carefully lifted from the stove by holding the wooden side handles. This can be done even when hot whilst baking a roast or bread. However, care should be taken when baking cakes as even a small

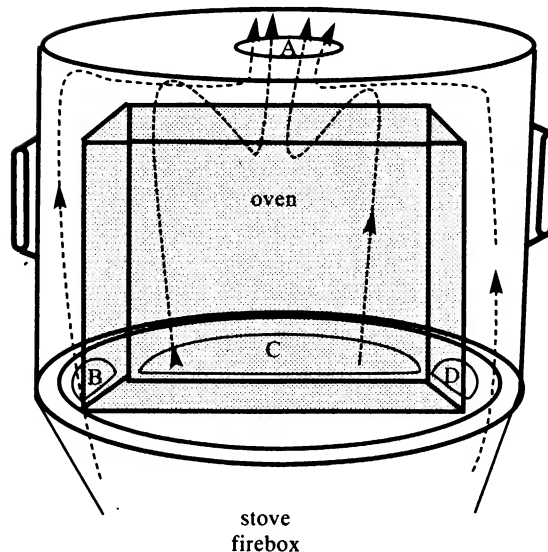
#### Turn Down Laps and Pop Rivet Screw Detail



Plan Of Oven



Side View Of Oven



bump or jiggle will stop the rising process and can cause them to flop.

## MAKING THE OVEN

My barbecue oven is simply a box with a lid, within a circular drum, and is constructed from nine riveted pieces of sheet metal: two circles and seven rectangles of varying sizes.

I cut two circular drum top and bottom pieces 400 mm in diameter, one rectangular (drum side) piece 1110 mm by 210 mm, two pieces 210 by 270 mm (oven top and bottom), two pieces 170 by 270 mm (oven sides). Extra laps of 15 mm were added to these dimensions where rivets were needed for oven/box joints (see drawing). The small hole 'A' (75 mm) in the circular top above the oven door is the equivalent of a chimney hole. The amount of draught is adjusted by moving the ceramic tile across this hole. The three holes 'B', 'C', and 'D' let flame, hot air and smoke rise and heat the oven walls. Hot air wants to rise fast, but to escape out the draught vent this heat must first cross the top of the oven ceiling from all sides, causing an even heat transfer to the oven walls and ceiling.

Holes are also cut in the bottom of the oven and the bottom of the drum to let fat from roasts drip downwards and add fuel, and aroma, to the fire.

In operation the oven chamber itself lets little heat escape and, as both steam and heat rise, the oven acts as a combined smoker and steamer. I have found that basting is unnecessary as roasts – as well as roasting from heat radiating from the very close oven walls – also cook in the steam generated from their own juices sizzling on the oven floor.

This steam and juice is all that is necessary to cook potatoes, carrots, pumpkins and snow peas, corn, cab-

bage etc, to perfection when stuffed inside a chicken. Even tasteless supermarket chickens take on a wonderful smoky flavour and their breasts remain juicy and tender. Yum!

The most heat is of course on the bottom of the oven and to stop roasts and bread from overcooking underneath, I have found it necessary to rivet an additional (sacrificial) layer of sheet metal underneath the drum floor. This easily replaced piece will burn out in time as it is in contact with the flames. It also adds a little insulation, reducing the heat on the oven floor. Extra pieces of sheet iron riveted inside the oven door also add insulation and lessen heat loss.


## Tools

Tools needed for the oven pictured here were: a hammer, a screwdriver, a pair of quality tin snips, an adjustable (slow) speed electric drill (a rechargeable battery drill is ideal), a pair of pop rivet pliers, and about 30  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch (3 mm) pop rivets and sharp quality double ended drill bits to fit. (I only ever buy these bits from a plumber's hardware store – there are some really suspect drill bits on the market these days.) Pop rivets were invented during

WW11 to speed up aircraft production. They didn't catch on in Australia until the 70s when they revolutionised the sheet metal and roofing industries. Today they can be bought – along with the necessary pliers – at any hardware or auto accessory store. Small  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch by  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch (6 mm) self-tapping screws are a good substitute for rivets in this design, the same  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch drill bit will produce the necessary holes.

Some small G-clamps or vice-grips come in handy when holding pieces of sheet metal in place for drilling and rivetting. The oven lid is constructed from three pieces of sheet iron. It can be hinged on one side, or, like mine, have turned down edges so it can simply be pushed into the opening to close the oven.

I have a heat-exchange copper coil built on to the bottom of my oven with my rainwater tank hose connected. Cold water soon becomes piping hot and fills my solar hot tub on cloudy sunless days, in about the same time that it takes to bake a fruit cake. Now, why would you want an oven that needs a coal-fired power station just to cook a chook?



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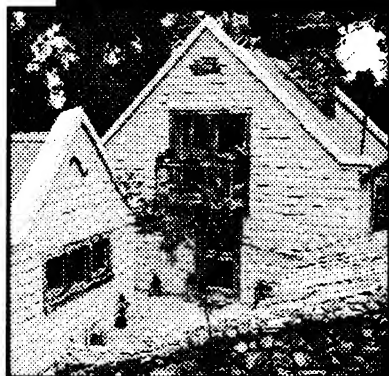
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# WHAT'S ON

With festivals and field days to participate in and competitions to enter, there is no reason for anyone to be bored during the next few months.

## MUSIC AND DANCE

Ceres Environment Park in Brunswick (Vic) holds regular Friday-night music and dance under the stars events during the warmer months, excluding the school holiday period. Festivals to celebrate a variety of themes are also a frequent feature. For details of these and other events at Ceres contact them at: 8 Lee St, Brunswick 3056, ph: 03-9587-2609.

## GREENING AUSTRALIA

Field days, conferences and competitions are a regular part of Greening Australia's activities. Forthcoming activities in Queensland include Enviro2000 from April 9 to 13, an environment field day on May 21, the Eureka Prize for science and environment work (entries close Feb 11), and a native Christmas tree decorating competition on Dec 17. For more details contact: Samantha Morris, GPO 9868, Brisbane 4001, ph: 07-3844-0211.

## PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

The United Nations Environment Programme is conducting an international photographic competition to raise awareness of the world environment through photography. The competition is open to both amateurs and professionals of any age. Photographs should convey the entrant's vision or dream, anger, despair, hopes or fears about the environment. Prizes will be awarded in

both junior and senior sections. For details and entry forms contact: Ron Knight on 02-9247-2490.

## GROW ORGANIC 2000

This event will be held on March 18 & 19 at Camp Coolamatong, Banksia Peninsula, near Bairnsdale. Featured will be knowledgeable speakers and great organic food. Camping or bunk style accommodation is available. For details contact: Robin or Bill Grant, PO Box 1263, Bairnsdale 3875, ph: 03-5157-1586.

## SEYMOUR ALTERNATIVE FARMING EXPO

This popular expo is to be held from February 18 to 20 at Kings Park Seymour. In the ninth year of the event, it's the place to visit for anyone interested in any aspect of farming, with lectures, food stalls, and hundreds of exhibits. For details contact: Frank Graham on 03-5799-1211.

## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOUNDATION

An inaugural meeting aimed at establishing a sustainable energy foundation will be held in Melbourne at City Campus, Flinders St, opposite Flinders St Railway Station, on December 9. The aim is to ensure that funds from government and other sources are spent appropriately to best promote sustainable technology. Contact Stephen Ingrouille at Going Solar, ph: 03-9387-9844.

Website: [www.goingsolar.com.au/sef](http://www.goingsolar.com.au/sef)

## COASTCARE

Thousands of free activities aimed at promoting awareness of coastal ecosystems

will be held throughout January. These include rock pool rambles, sand sculpting, beach combing, animal tracking, coastal indigenous medicines and foods, fishing clinics, and spotlight tours. For details contact: Suzy Upcroft on 02-9412-1040.

## WINDELLAMA SMALL FARMS FIELD DAY

This event is aimed at helping owners, or potential owners, of small holdings, with advice on all manner of relevant issues from cropping to animals to conservation. Held at Windellama, south-east of Goulburn, NSW, on December 4. For details contact: Carina Clark on 02-4844-5422.

Email: [Geebung@goulburn.net.au](mailto:Geebung@goulburn.net.au)

## MOORA MOORA FESTIVAL

The theme of this year's festival, held on February 26 at Healesville (Vic), is Giving Children A Future. It incorporates a programme of music and dance, much great food, crafts, alternative technologies, and many activities for children. The day culminates in an open-air dance. A short story competition is held in conjunction with the festival. For all details and entry forms for the competition ph: 03-5962-4104.

## AUSTRALIAN HERB CONFERENCE

To be held on July 7 to 9 at Townsville. Featured speakers include Penny Woodward and Bill Hankin. Workshop topics covering a variety of practical and innovative herby topics. For details contact: Valda William, PO Box 314, Aithenvale 4814. Ph: 07-4773-6327

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# FODDER FORESTS

## DIRECT SEEDING

by Vince Conlan, Binya, NSW.

Planting trees on farms is a great idea; it is, however, expensive and time consuming. The cheapest method is to allow natural regeneration. Simply fence off an area from stock, wait and watch. Greening Australia may even provide funding for such a project. If you have specific species that you wish to plant or there are too few surviving trees, making regeneration unlikely or impossible, then the most economic option is direct seeding.

### DIRECT SEEDING

#### Advantages

- It's quicker, easier, cheaper, requires less work and takes less time.
- A mixture of trees and shrubs can be sown at the same time, with different germination rates mimicking natural regeneration.
- There is no possibility of J-root and plants tend to have better root growth.
- With good ground preparation, more plants may germinate in following years.
- In most cases, existing farm machinery can be used.

#### Disadvantages

- The younger the trees, the more susceptible they are to competition from weeds.
- The planting area must be kept free of stock for a year or more longer than when seedlings are used. This loss of land productivity should be accounted as a cost of establishment.
- Heavy soils and nonwetting sands reduce successful seed germination. Although I had good germination of salt-bush seed, a slight caking of the soil was enough to prevent the plant emerging. Nonwetting sands don't retain enough moisture for newly shot seed to survive.
- Many seeds require some pre-treatment and even after treatment germination remains low.

#### Site Preparation Is Critical

Ripping and cultivation encourage root development, reduce weeds and

improve the ability of the soil to soak up water. Weed control is critical. Weeds will rob your trees of sunlight, moisture and nutrients. It is important to begin weed control one to two years in advance.

Research shows that trees survive best within a metre square area free of weeds. Anything less results in dramatic reductions in tree survival. Anything more does not significantly increase tree survival.

Improving the soil also helps tree survival. Use fertilisers, gypsum and/or organic matter. Planting cover crops or nurse crops can help reduce the weed burden, improve the soil and increase tree survival. I have not tried that yet but I'm going to.

It is important to protect your site from animals. Individual tree guards are okay but stock tend to knock them down and graze any branches or tops that are exposed. If you are planting a lot of trees, fence them off. Even then, if rabbits or hares are a problem, individual tree guards may be necessary.

#### Sowing Time

The best time to sow is as soon as possible after the autumn break. If you receive

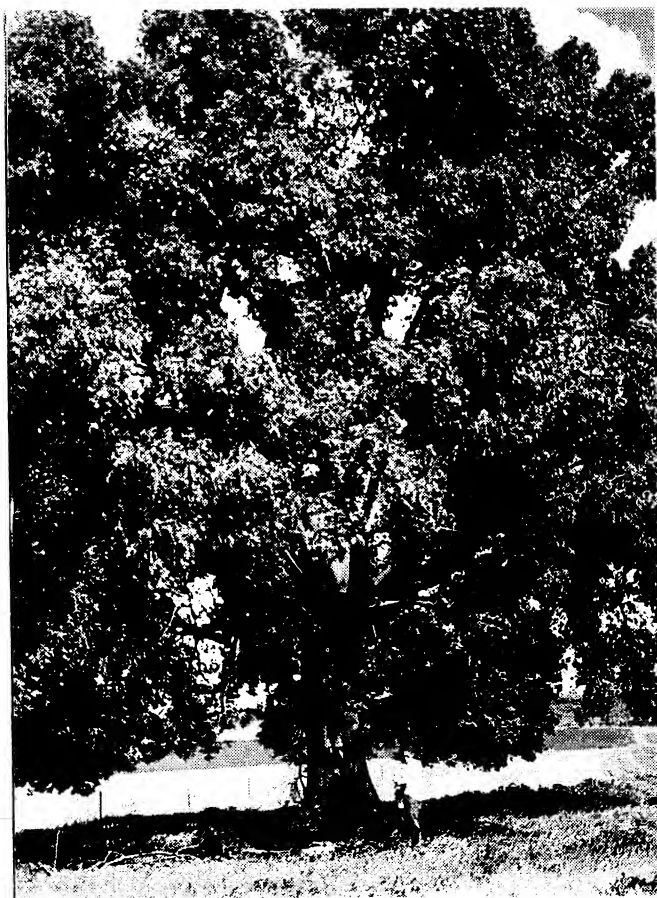
over 600 mm of rain a year it may be best to sow in September, or even October to avoid frosts. It is also important not to sow seeds too deep as they will never emerge. If you have heavy, caking soils it may be necessary to cover the seed with vermiculite, sand or sawdust so that it germinates in a loose medium, rather than burying it in the soil.

Some commercial farmers are using their crop planting equipment to sow seed. The ground is worked and sprayed with four litres of Treflan per hectare. The seed is then sown or broadcast over the area using conventional crop sowing equipment. Treflan provides weed control for up to two years, by this time the trees are well established. This certainly seems the easiest method of establishing trees that I have encountered. So, if you don't mind residual herbicides, contact your local agronomist.

One tree that will establish well by direct seeding or even by fencing off existing trees from stock is the beautiful kurrajong (*Brachychiton populneus*). If you are growing trees for bush food, beauty or fodder, then kurrajongs will be a great addition to your forest.

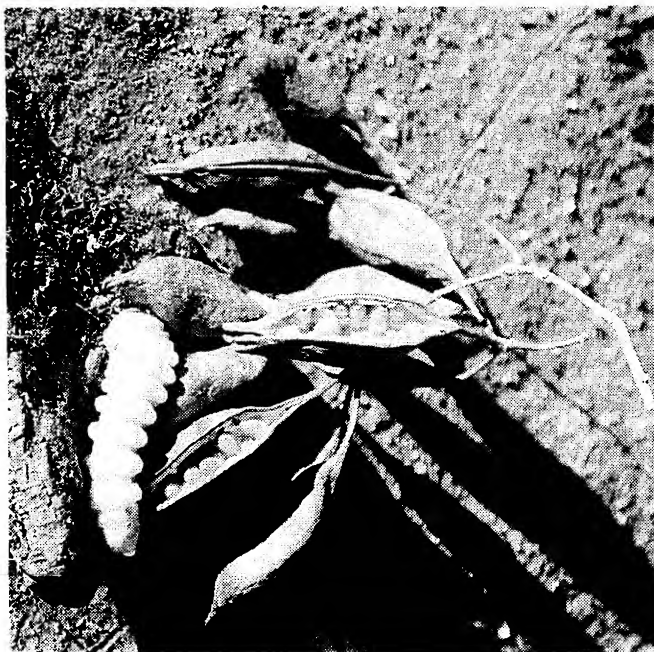


The direct seeding method of tree planting has many advantages, especially in large-scale situations



Left: The beautiful kurrajong tree, its many uses include wind-breaks, shade, stock fodder, products made from the bark.

Below: The seeds are highly nutritious and tasty, enjoyed by both humans and animals.



## KURRAJONG

### Habitat

Kurrajongs grow on most free draining soils, sandstone hills and loam red earths, all of which are slightly acidic on the surface and neutral or slightly alkaline at depth. They grow on canal banks, but not in rice paddies. Kurrajong thrive with an average annual rainfall of 350 mm. They are drought resistant and frost hardy.

### Propagation

Kurrajong is easily grown from seed. Germination is improved by soaking seed in hot water (80°C). Take a pot of boiling water, let it cool for 30 seconds and add seed. Let the seed soak for a few hours and plant into fertile, free draining soils. They flower in summer, the seed is set amongst dense, fine hairs and contained in boat-shaped pods which ripen and split open in autumn. Most seed is quickly eaten by birds or insects so it is important to harvest seed promptly once pods open. Kurrajongs will also regenerate wherever trees are protected from stock.

### Uses

Kurrajong seed is an exceptional mineral-rich food. High in protein and fats, it is deli-

cious when roasted. Care must be taken, however, when handling seed. Hairs surrounding the seeds are sharp. At best they are itchy, but they can become painful splinters if rubbed into sensitive skin or eyes. Roasted seed is eaten whole or ground and made into a drink or damper.

Old trees are sometimes infested with moth larvae. Similar to witchetty grubs or bardie grubs, they are delicious and make great bait for cod, if you can get them on the hook. A couple of years ago we went fishing on the Murrumbidgee and my cousin John ate all the bloody bait! They are delicious toasted or raw and have a pleasant nutty aftertaste.

Wiradjuri people use the bark to make string for bags, fish nets and bandages. The roots of young trees can be eaten and the older tree roots were a valuable source of water.

The leaves are considered excellent fodder. Stock readily eat leaves and smaller branches and trees will reshoot even after severe lopping. Older trees show steps cut into the trunk by axeman. Nowadays most trees are lopped with chainsaws by farmers willing to risk a limb. Cutting thick branches up a high tree

is a risky thing to do and done rarely.

Kurrajong trees grace many gardens, parks, cities and farms. They are beautiful, making ideal windbreaks and excellent shade trees. Pasture will grow right up to their base. There are several brachychiton species, all of which make excellent garden features, particularly Illawarra flame and desert bottle trees.

Next Issue: Windbreaks and mulberry trees.

Vince Conlan is a nursery man and farmer. Contact him at: 'Gowrie', Binya 2665. Ph: 02-6968-3310.

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# COOL CHRISTMAS COMESTIBLES

by Heather Kozak, Dellicknora, Vic.

I escape the tyranny of the huge roast and hot pudding style Christmas dinners with cold meats and chilled salads, but give them a celebratory spin by using colour and form to excite everyone's senses.

Jellied salads go in and out of vogue, but they are a firm favourite for family feasts in my home. They are easy to serve, spectacular to view and a deliciously wobbly way to encourage children to consume vegetables. Here are some of the prettiest ones.

## MAIN COURSE DISHES

### Golden Sunset Salad

- 1 pineapple (crushed or cubed)
- 1 large carrot (grated)
- 2 sticks of celery (finely chopped)
- 1 small onion or small bunch of shallots (finely chopped)
- 1 cucumber (thin slices)
- 1 tbsp each of chopped mint and parsley
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup mayonnaise
- ground black pepper and sea salt to taste

1 packet lemon/lime jelly or agar powder to set 500 ml

Make the jelly and when half-set stir in all the other ingredients except the mayonnaise. Pour into a wet mould – I use a wonderful copper fish-shaped tin that I bought years ago from a specialty kitchen shop, but you can try anything such as a ring cake tin, a small mixing bowl, or a large Easter chocolate mould. Swirl the mayonnaise decoratively through the jelly mixture with a spoon, then set in the fridge or a very cool place for about three hours.

Dip the outside of the mould briefly in warm water before inverting a plate on top of the jelly and flipping the whole thing over in one smooth motion (the evidence of some not-so-smooth motions has decorated my kitchen floor!).

The jellied salad should look like a fresh, translucent jewel with the ingredients floating inside, misted with mayonnaise. Surround the masterpiece



Heather and six year old Karla enjoy creative time together in the kitchen. Children will enjoy the Christmas feast even more if they've participated in its preparation

with lettuce and other contrasting salad items.

### Scarlet Sunset Salad

- 2 tbsp gelatine or agar
- 4 cups tomato juice or equivalent amount in skinned, deseeded pulp
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup finely chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup gherkin or pickled cucumber, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- pepper and salt to taste
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 cloves
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup chopped basil
- 3 tbsp lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup finely chopped celery
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped beetroot
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup finely chopped capsicum

Soften gelatine or agar in one cup of room temperature tomato juice. In a saucepan, combine two cups of tomato juice, onion, garlic, gherkin, sugar, seasonings, bay leaf, cloves, and basil. Simmer gently for five minutes then remove the bay leaf and cloves. Add the softened gelatine to the hot juice

mixture and stir well, then add all the remaining tomato juice and the lemon juice. Chill until half-set then stir in the celery, beetroot and capsicum; waiting until partially set allows the vegetables to suspend themselves evenly instead of all sinking to the bottom.

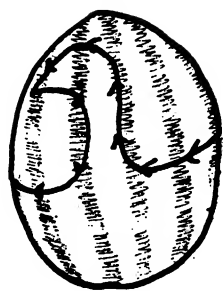
Set in a wet mould – a ring tin gives an effective shape – and turn out onto a bed of coleslaw to serve.

### Lamb and Mint Ring

Living in a sheep farming area, we see a lot of leftover roast lamb. This dish glamorises those old leftovers and makes a nice nonvegetarian partner to the jellied salads above.

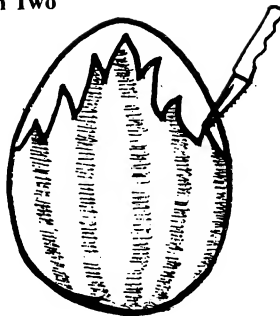
- 2 cups diced cold lamb
- 1 cup diced cooked potatoes
- 150 ml stock, meat or vegetable
- MSG-free powdered stock may be used in 150 ml water
- 2 tbsp chopped mint
- 1 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tbsp vinegar
- 2 tbsp gelatine or agar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cold water

Diagram One

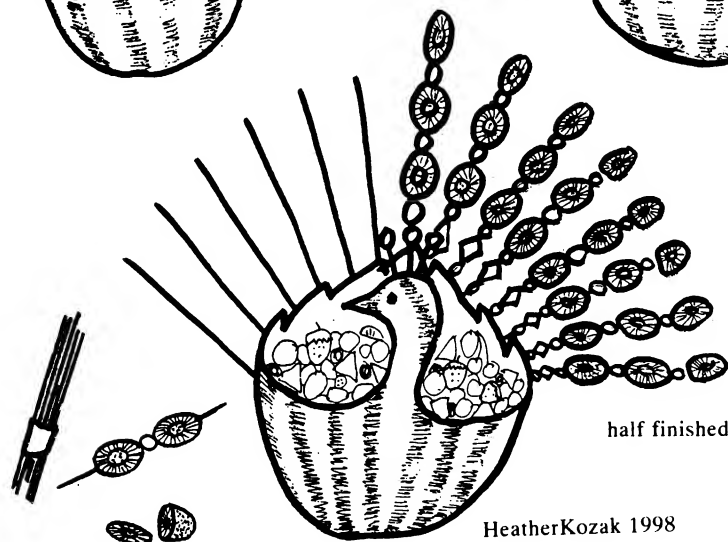


front

Diagram Two



back



half finished

HeatherKozak 1998

Heat a minimal amount of oil in a pan and saute the lamb and potatoes gently. Remove from the pan and lightly season. Bring the stock to the boil and add the mint, sugar and vinegar, then remove from heat. Dissolve the gelatine in the cold water, then stir this into the stock mixture. Add the meat and potatoes and pour into a wet 23 cm ring mould or cake tin. When cool, set for two hours in the fridge. Turn out on to a platter when firm. Decorate with a pile of cherry tomatoes in the hole in the centre and arrange lettuce leaves around outer edge.

You may need more setting agent on particularly hot days. If disaster occurs and the jelly collapses, mix 1 tbsp gelatine in with  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup of water and stir this into the unset mess. Remould the jelly and chill for several hours, it should behave itself then.

## DESSERTS

### Fruit Salad Peacock

The peacock, made from the fruits of summer, is a visual stunner. I've made it for wedding smorgasboards, parties, and of course for the Christmas table. I have lots of busy helpers when it comes to threading the fruit on sate sticks. It's a lot of fun to make and people will talk about it for months afterward.

Find a watermelon that will sit flat on one end. Decide which is the front and carve a question mark shape into it, starting high up the melon (see diagram 1). Use a small sharp knife for the best manoeuvrability. Continue around the melon, cutting out the tail section at the back (see diagram 2). When the cuts are complete, lift the unwanted rind and fruit out, easing the flesh with a large spoon.

Scoop out all the watermelon flesh and reserve for the fruit salad. Shape the peacock head and beak with a small knife. Now take at least 14 long sate sticks or skewers and thread watermelon, grapes and kiwi fruit slices onto them. These make the peacock tail, with the kiwi fruit forming the 'eyes' of the feathers. Fill the bowl of the peacock's body with fruit salad, toothpick a black grape eye on the head and use short sticks to attach the crown of feathers on top. You should now have a magnificent table centrepiece.

### Iced Christmas Pudding

This is a quick and easy recipe, and the ingredients are probably already in your cupboard now (except the brandy!).

First mix three cups of mixed fruit and nuts, plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  a teaspoon each of mixed spice, cinnamon and nutmeg in a bowl with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of brandy. While they are soaking tip one chilled tin of

reduced fat evaporated milk into the largest bowl of an electric mixer and beat it at the fastest setting. While it is beating, whip 300 ml of cream with 1 teaspoon of vanilla. When the evaporated milk has tripled in volume, fold in the cream and fruit gently, then pour into a wet pudding basin. Cover with a plate and freeze until solid, then dip the basin quickly in warm water, run a knife around the edge and turn out. Drizzle chocolate or brandy sauce over before serving. Serves 8 easily.

### A PUNCH IN THE MOUTH

My mother has a thirty year old punch-bowl that has resided over many a family gathering, its glass cups tinkling as they dangle from little hooks around the rim. My memories are filled with the sight of deeply coloured magic potions, ice jingling, beads of condensation running down the sloping sides of the bowl to the dampening tablecloth below.

Mum would core apples, cut triangles out of the apple lengthwise, then thinly slice them, resulting in apple stars with handy finger holes to fish them out of the punch. She also froze borage flowers and mint leaves into ice cubes to float about in the punch, slowly releasing the flavour of their icy cargo.

I bought my own glass punchbowl set from a discount shop for such a low price that I use it with reckless abandon, especially for kids' parties. The punch doesn't have to be oversweet or alcoholic, just fruity and colourful. The following recipe is a favourite among the younger set, and an excellent morning-after cure!

### Healthy Christmas Punch

1 lt tomato juice  
500 ml carrot juice  
500 ml orange juice  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup lemon juice mixed with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups water

borage flowers, mint leaves, lemon balm sprigs, rose petals, sliced strawberries

Mix the tomato, carrot and orange juice in the punch bowl. Pour the lemon water into ice cube trays and freeze borage, mint, etc into each cube. If some of the ice cubes are made from pure fruit juice the punch won't become watered down. Top up the punch with soda water or ginger ale, float apple stars, red, yellow and green capsicum cut into shapes with a biscuit cutter, and ice cubes, on the surface and enjoy yourselves.



# TERMITES

## EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

### PART III

by Jack Ross, Port Macquarie, NSW.

In the two previous issues of GR I've described two different early warning systems to aid in termite control – the wheel system and the modified herringbone system. This time I'll discuss a third system – the dual detector system – which I developed after moving to a house in an area of known termite activity.

#### DUAL DETECTOR SYSTEM

Following a further relocation due to work transfer, and the availability of plastic materials, I made further modifications to an early warning system when I moved into a house in an area of high termite activity. Termites had been in the house prior to purchase but had been eradicated.

The new system consisted of two detectors, identified as 'A' and 'B', placed alternately around the building at a spacing of approximately four metres.

The 'A' detector consisted of a 150 mm diameter plastic pipe 300 mm in length with 9 mm holes drilled in vertical rows spaced 90 degrees around the circumference. The holes were drilled in the pipe at about 20 mm spacing and

200 mm up from the bottom. The pipe was placed vertically in an excavated hole with the top raised about 30 mm above ground level and fitted with a galvanised iron cap with a 25 mm lip all round to keep out light. The lure in the detector unit consisted of a 100 mm square section of well seasoned Oregon about 30 mm thick in the centre of which was placed a vertical wire about 200 mm long.

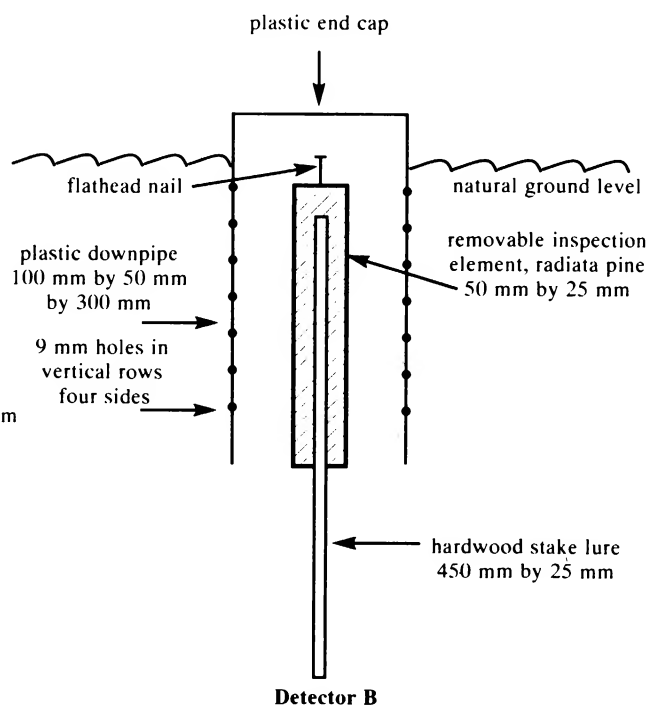
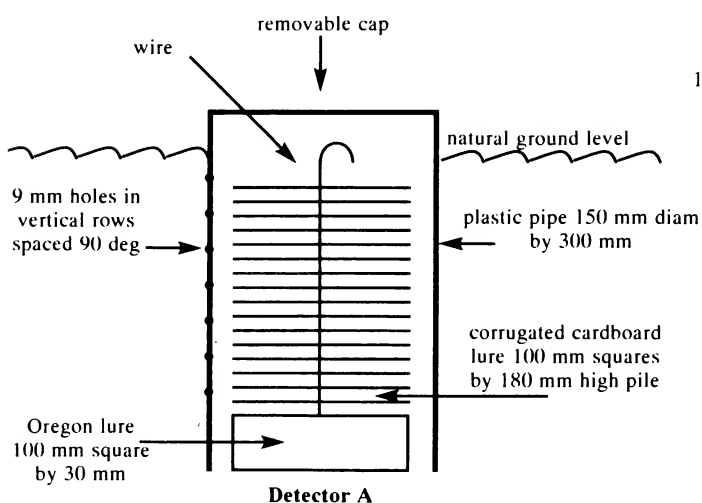
Corrugated cardboard squares of 100 mm sides were pushed down over the vertical wire to form a pack about 180 mm high.

The top of the wire was bent over to allow the lure to be removed for inspection as required. The Oregon base rested on the moist soil and after a period of a few weeks sufficient condensed water dripped on to the cardboard and Oregon to give an indication of fungal decay of both cardboard and wood.

Detector 'B' was made from 100

mm by 50 mm plastic downpipe. Each unit was made of 300 mm length with 9 mm holes drilled in a vertical row on each side to a level about 200 mm from the base. A standard plastic end cap was used to cover the pipe and, in order to ensure darkness during daylight hours, the cap and part of the pipe protruding above the ground, were painted with two coats of dark coloured plastic paint.

A two-section wooden lure was employed with a fixed and a movable element. The fixed element was a 450 mm hardwood stake 25 mm square driven into the ground with the top of the stake being about 50 mm below the top of the 300 mm plastic pipe surround. The removable element was made from well cured 50 mm by 25 mm radiata pine in the form of an inverted 'U' of dimensions such that it could slide over the full length of the hardwood stake but firmly touch the sides of the stake throughout. A nail on top of the invert-



ed 'U' section enabled it to be withdrawn for inspection.

Both detectors proved their effectiveness. After about 10 months termites existed in one of the 'A' detectors. An inspection revealed the presence of a colony of termites inside the hollow of a large blackbutt tree about 15 metres from the detector. Five months later one of the 'B' detectors on another side of the house showed presence of termites. In this case, the colony was traced to a partially buried old tree stump in an adjacent vacant property about 40 metres away.

All three warning systems proved their worth in indicating the presence of termites near the house in time for appropriate action to be taken. They also enabled me to narrow down the likely direction of the colony and in all cases they were located without difficulty.

See GRs 77, 88 & 99 for more information on safe methods of termite control.

## SOLAR BATTERIES

2-6-12 VOLT

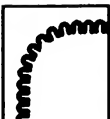
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## ROUND THE MARKET PLACE

We hope you enjoy this feature introducing new products relevant to readers' lifestyles and interests.

### TWO-WAY UHF CB RADIO

The Uniden UH045 is a small, lightweight handset that runs on four AAA batteries. The three-kilometre range between handsets makes them a great way to keep in touch when bushwalking, camping or fishing with friends and family this summer. The handsets can also communicate with existing UHF two-way radios in cars and boats on common channels. The radios can access 19 different channels, or frequencies, and have 38 selectable privacy codes. A licence is not required and they are available through Dick Smith, Tandy, Harvey Norman, Strathfield Car Radios and other communications specialists at a cost of \$199.

**Contact: Uniden Australia, 345 Princes Highway, Rockdale 2216. Ph: 02-9599-3355.**

### PETER'S FREE-RANGE POULTRY MIX

This free-range poultry mix is a 15% protein ration made from premium quality ingredients. The product is a mixture of a variety of tasty grains, free of artificial colours, flavours and animal by-products, making it an appealing substitute to layer pellets. It contains added vitamins and minerals necessary for optimal egg production, and black sunflower seeds to add lustre to plumage. Birds can select to meet their nutritional requirements. Suitable for all breeds, and available from Safeway, Woolworths and Big W.

**Contact: Peter's Pet Food, Central Court Arcade, Greensborough 3088. Ph: 1800-351-339.**

### CHRISTMAS GIFTS THAT SUPPORT NONPROFIT ORGANISATIONS

Merchandise sales at Christmas are an important source of funding for groups like Amnesty International and Community Aid Abroad. Using their latest catalogues to purchase our Christmas gifts and cards is also a way for us to show support for a world free from poverty and human rights violations. This year's catalogues have some good-looking gift ideas to suit a range of budgets. Many of the items for sale are organic, environmentally friendly, or have been produced without disadvantaging workers. Call up to get your free catalogues and make a difference. Or you could help the Australian Conservation Foundation by ordering some of their beautiful diaries and calendars for the coming year. These celebrate the diversity of Australia's stunning wild places. Alternatively, support cancer research and get the latest Breast Cancer Institute of Australia's diary outlining useful health tips and introducing a new theme for each month. These diaries are now available from newsagencies and Jenny Craig Centres for \$9.95.

**Amnesty International: 1300-787-830. Community Aid Abroad: 1800-088-455. Australian Conservation Foundation, 03-9580-5599, or**

**www.monocrafts.com.au/acf. Breast Cancer Institute of Australia: 02-4921-1895.**

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**Contact: Felton Grimwade & Bickford, 61 Clarinda Road, Oakleigh South. Ph: 1800-655-841.**



### PYROGRAPHY HELPMATE

The latest pyrographic tool is a transportable Pyro-Pen. A feature of this model is its excellent power-source capability: it can be plugged into the cigarette lighter in your vehicle, or clipped into a 12 or 24 volt battery. Other product features include a safety red indicator light that glows when the unit is on, a 1.5 metre pen cord to allow flexibility of movement, three nib sizes, 12 heat settings for all wood types, lightweight (only 1.1 kg, including 3 m plug cord). This is an Australian designed and manufactured product with a 12-month warranty.

**Contact: Pyrographic Equipment Manufacturing, PO Box 331, Kilsyth 3137. Ph/fax: 03-9724-9320.**

### MITCH'S TREE MULCHER

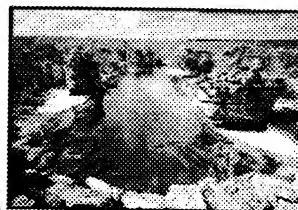
This handy tree mulcher is made entirely from recycled plastic and is extremely water efficient, reducing water consumption by up to 70 percent. It is easy to install and dismantle, and has been thoroughly trialled and tested. It works in both commercial and domestic applications and will help you save heaps of water and money, while promoting fantastic growth throughout your garden. Great for those living in areas with water restrictions.

**Contact: Ray Mitchelmore, 103 Nolan Avenue, Maryborough 3465. Ph: 03-5461-3000.**

### HERB SEEDS WITH HANDY LABEL

Herb Herbert's Seeds have just released a variety of the most popular herb seeds, but with a bit of a difference. These seeds have been prepacked in foil and attached to a useful pictorial label identifying the herb. This label is obviously a handy way of keeping track of your plantings and can also be re-used at a later stage. The seed and label combos are available from leading garden centres and are priced at \$2.45.

**Contact: Herb Herbert Pty Ltd, PO Box 24, Monbulk 3793. Ph: 03-9756-7928.**





# PERSONAL PRESENTS



by Deidre Swanson, Hillbank, SA.

Christmas is almost here again. The cash registers are ringing and the advertising is getting fierce. Don't blow your budget. Ignore the commercialism. Give presents that have a personal, handmade touch that will cost you little or no money to make. Try some of these:

- Make your own cards. Cut out a motif from Christmas material. Glue onto cardboard. Outline the image using a gold pen or glass paint. Add your message inside.

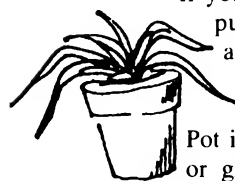
- Cook a cake, quiche, pie, or loaf of bread.

- Line a cane basket with a checked tea towel. Add homemade scones, jam and fresh cream.



- Write out your favourite poem. Try calligraphy on handmade paper, add pressed flowers, sketches, stamps. Frame it or decoupage it onto a favourite object.

- Line a basket with straw or raffia. Fill with fresh free range eggs.



- If you have access to a computer print up some address labels.

- Grow some plants from cuttings. Pot into a \$2 hanging basket or group your smaller pots together in a basket or box.

- Fill a plate or old coffee jar with homemade chocolates, biscuits, slices or sweets.

- Fill a pretty jar or bottle with bubble bath. Start with an inexpensive shampoo, add a few drops of food colouring and essential oil. It works just like the 'real' thing.

- Make a gingerbread house and decorate with lollies and icing 'snow'

- Make and wrap individual Christmas puddings or cakes. They're perfect for people living on their own.



- Collect your favourite recipes. Stick them or write them into a notebook or photo album.

- Fill a basket with handmade bonbons or fortune cookies. Cut out circle shapes from sweet shortcrust pastry. Add a message. Moisten the edges with milk, fold over and press. Shape the cookie into a horseshoe shape. Bake till golden brown



- Collect samples and freebies you get in magazines, junk mail, testers and two for one offers – shampoos, coffee, soup, moisturiser etc. Place together in a basket or box. Add potpourri and a face washer and wrap with cellophane and ribbons.

- Use up your fabric scraps. Make them into cushions, placemats or pin cushions

- Fill a colander or bowl with fresh fruit or vegies from your garden. Wrap with cellophane

- Cover a cardboard box with old comic pages. Fill it with gingerbread men and popcorn.



- Collect favourite photos, make a montage and frame.

- Pot up cuttings of herbs or fill jars with dried herbs and spices.

- Make candles from sheets of beeswax and tie together with ribbon.



- Wrap up a bunch of dried flowers or present them in a box or jug from an op shop. Try drying your own lavender, gypsophila, hydrangeas, roses, gum leaves, tansy, proteas, everlasting daisies or statice

- Relax and enjoy some peace and quiet.



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# GIFT BAGS

by Sherryn Savage, Currumbine, WA.

You can buy gift bags from the shops, but why not make your own? It's so simple and inexpensive. Once you've had a go I'm sure you will start using them for all your gifts. It's a good idea to make up several at a time so that you've always got some on hand. I've given you the dimensions for a small bag, but by altering them you can make up any size bag you require. Another idea is to design your own wrapping paper to make the bags from. It will not only cut your costs, but will add that personal touch. Children in particular love to design their own.

## MAKING THE BAGS

### Materials

- gift wrap
- cardboard
- cord
- glue

### Method

Cut a piece of wrapping paper (36 x 22 cm). Turn it over and rule it up (lightly using a pencil), as per diagram 1.

Now fold along all of the dotted lines except for lines A and B. If you place a ruler along each line and fold against it the task is a lot easier. Then fold lines A and B in the opposite direction.

Cut a piece of cardboard for the base of the bag (11 x 6 cm) and two pieces for the handle supports (10 x 2 cm).

Glue the handle supports into position as per diagram 2. Then glue the entire top

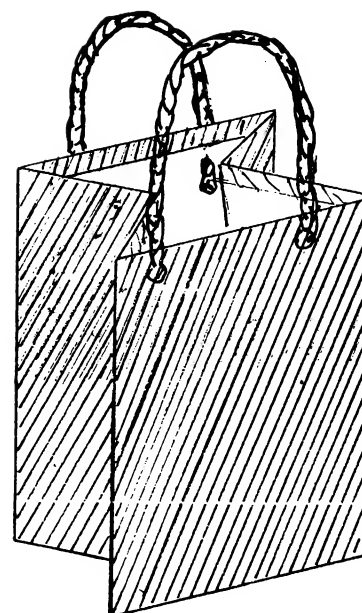
edge of the bag over the handle supports using the prefolded line as a guide.

Run glue down the  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cm patterned side edge of your bag and secure it to the opposite edge. Your bag should now look like diagram 3.

Turn the bag upside down and, using the prefolded lines, fold the bottom of the bag into place. The ends should be folded down first and then either side. Evenly put glue on one side of the cardboard base and carefully slide it into the bottom of the bag, securing it into place. You will then need to put a small amount of glue on the remaining flap at the bottom of the bag.

Cut out a piece of cardboard and wrapping paper (10 x 6 cm) and glue them together for your card. Fold in half and punch a hole in the inside corner.

Punch two holes evenly into the handle supports on either side of the bag for the handles.



Cut two lengths of cord (20 cm each). Thread one piece through the holes on one side of the bag then knot both ends on the inside of the bag. Thread the card onto the other piece of cord before attaching the remaining handle in the same manner.

Diagram 1

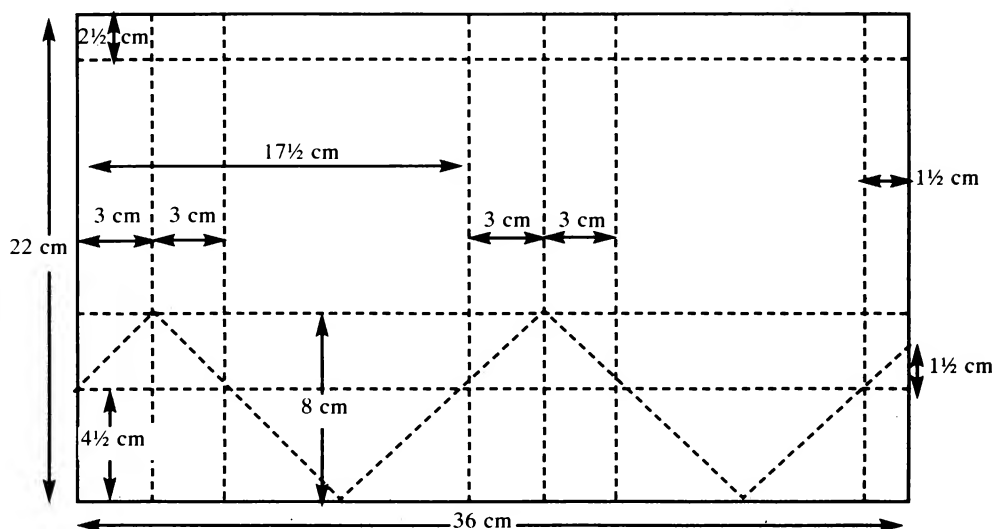


Diagram 2

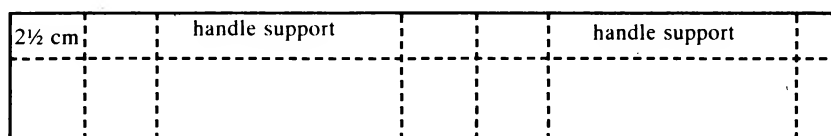
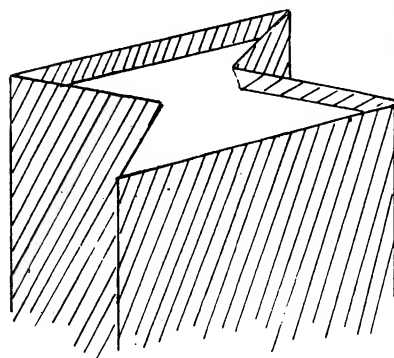


Diagram 3



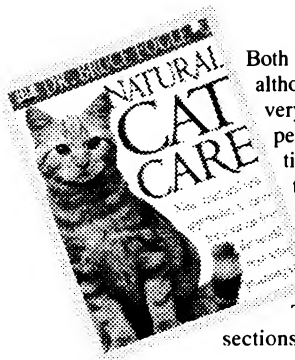


# Recent Releases

On this page we present information about newly published books that we feel will interest readers, with details of prices and publishers. Titles described can be ordered through your nearest bookstore.

## ★ FEATURE TITLES ★

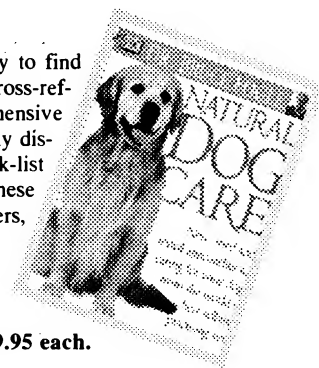
### NATURAL DOG CARE and NATURAL CAT CARE – Dr Bruce Fogle



Both these titles are beautifully laid out and, although they are detailed and practical, are very easy to use. From a natural health perspective, each book covers information on a range of subjects: different therapies like homoeopathy, shiatsu and relaxation therapy; specific problems like digestion, parasites and skin disorders; as well as subjects like the importance of grooming. These 74 subjects have been set out in sections: development, training, nutrition,

health care and health disorders. It is easy to find your way around these books that include cross-referencing, colour coding and a comprehensive index. The information has been attractively displayed and includes highlighter and check-list boxes, pictures, charts and diagrams. These books would make ideal gifts for pet owners, or those hoping to be.

H/b, 160pp, Dorling Kindersley Publishing, PO Box 414, St Leonards NSW 1590. Ph: 02-9438-4455. RRP \$29.95 each.



### CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Ragnhild Rees

This useful little book is part of the Better Homes and Gardens Mini Workbook Series and can be found in good newsagents. With Christmas fast approaching, Rees has given us a handy guide to making our own attractive decorations for the tree, the house and the table, without spending a fortune. At the back of the book is a list of the tools you will require and there are separate lists of materials you will need for each of the decorations outlined. There are some lovely colourful ideas here and they're not hard to make. There's a bright peppercorn wreath, pretty snowflakes made with glass beads, and glittering beaded bells, to name a few. You can even make your own bonbons and fill them with personalised gifts.

P/b, 64pp, Murdoch Books, 45 Jones Street Ultimo NSW 2007. Ph: 02-9692-2349. RRP \$3.95.

### PROFITABLE FARMING – Making More Money From Your Farm

John Mason

Farmers perennially ask themselves if there is a better way of making money from the land. John Mason argues that there is, and outlines some new ways of doing so and why it might be a pertinent response to the changing market. He considers such ventures as farm tourism, adding value to produce – by distilling oils or preserving food, specialising in various crops and livestock – as well as reducing costs through self-sufficiency and energy conservation. Importantly too, Mason shows how such enterprises may be embraced with minimal risk and outlines ways of improving your land for the long-term. There is a wealth of information in this book for those who are considering change.

P/b, 142pp, Kangaroo Press, Simon & Schuster Australia, PO Box 507, East Roseville NSW 2069. Ph: 02-9415-9917. RRP \$19.95.

### YATES GARDEN DIARY AND CALENDAR 2000

Attractively packaged with photography from the Open Garden Scheme, both calendar and diary will prove useful for home gardeners as each offers valuable tips on what needs to be done in your garden on a monthly basis, as well as other useful gardening hints. The diary is spiral bound, has two pages to a week, and includes a list of which seeds to sow when. The calendar opens up to provide plenty of space if you like to display a note of appointments for the family to see.

P/b, Angus and Robertson, Harper Collins Publishers, PO Box 321, Pymble, NSW 2073. Ph: 02-9952-5000. RRP \$16.96 – Diary RRP \$19.95 – Calendar.

### VEGETARIAN MEALS

For Babies and Young Children

Natalee McLean

Natalee McLean's enthusiastic book about vegetarian food for your children is helpful and easy to absorb. There is a useful section about baby's transition from milk to solids, some sensible information on sterilisation and the proper preparation and storage of meals. Then there are over 60 recipes, conveniently separated into suitable age groups, though many meals are sure to become family favourites, such as the spinach and tomato risotto, eggplant bake, or lentil casserole. McLean believes children who consume tinned or prepackaged meals miss out on the valuable experiences of smells, textures and tastes that come with home-cooked food.

P/b, 134pp, Simon & Schuster, PO Box 507, East Roseville, NSW 2069. Ph: 02-9415-9924. RRP \$16.95.

### NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Ken Griffiths

Whitley Award-winner Ken Griffiths has over 30 years experience as a wildlife photographer and shares some of his secrets with us in this detailed and beautifully illustrated book. You'll find out more about camera equipment including accessories like polarising filters, lenses or reflectors. You can also learn directly about Griffiths' successful shots, and his guidelines for photographing wildlife and plants. Useful chapters include utilising natural light, macro and close-up photography, picture faults and technical problems.

P/b, 148pp, UNSW Press, University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW 2052. Ph: 02-9664-0902. RRP \$29.95.

### MASSAGE

The Healing Power of Touch

Karen Smith

Couples can use this book as a tool to explore their partner's body, while offering pleasure and relaxation. Find out more about key massage strokes and how to use them for the benefit of your bodies. Learn about blending essential oils for the seasons and a variety of symptoms, or discover more about using a range of water therapies to support your health. This book has plenty of illustrations to demonstrate the key massage strokes, as well as useful charts outlining oil blending and use.

P/b, 144pp, Simon & Schuster, PO Box 507, East Roseville, NSW 2069. Ph: 02-9415-9924. RRP \$29.95.

# SWEET LEAF BUSH

by Jane Lawrance, Babinda, Qld.

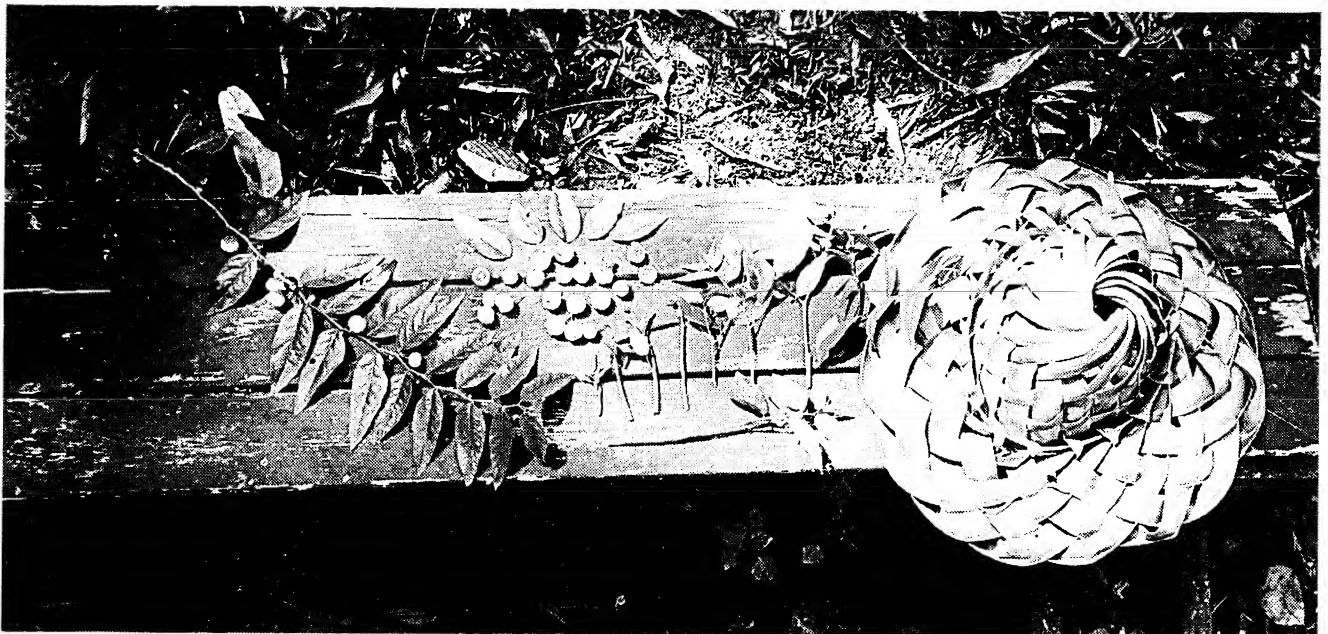
Sweet leaf is definitely one of my favourite plants, full of protein, vitamins, fibre and minerals and always available in the garden come rain or shine! Originating from India and Malaysia this hardy perennial is known as *Changkok manis*, *Sayor manis*, *Katuk*, or, to you and me, sweet leaf bush. Belonging to the Euphorbiaceae family with its characteristic reddish flat flowers under the stems, *Sauropus androgynous* is a fast growing leafy bush showing high resistance to both disease and insect predation, thriving in almost any soil types, wet or dry.

Reaching heights of up to three metres or more in full sun or part shade, regular pruning (eating!) is advisable to reap the high-yielding crop of young sweet and juicy, tender regrowth shoots. Eaten raw, full of vitamins A and C, these shoots and young leaves (similar tasting to garden peas with a nutty flavour) are ideal in salads or accompanying a hot dish as a fibre-rich, decorative vegetable. The older leaves are steamed, stir-fried, added to stews, soups etc. If one of your bushes has been left untrimmed, allow the small decorative red flowers to fruit – green berries emerge ripening through to white then a purplish shade, measuring approximately 15 mm diameter. Pick these and steam or stir-fry for a scrumptious new vegie on the plate, looking a little like fish eyeballs! Why not



Above: Jane Lawrance harvesting sweet leaf. Jane is passionate about promoting unusual plants for permaculture and readers in the north can tune in to her enthusiastic ABC radio programme.

Below: Leaves, berries and tender young shoots of sweet leaf bush are all edible and enjoyed by both humans and livestock.



try crystallising the flowers and berries for an exciting edible cake decoration?

The four to six black angular seeds (approximately 10 mm long, 5 mm wide) readily germinate from these berries for propagation, or simply propagate via cuttings. A good hearty root system will develop in water or moist soil.

As an understorey permaculture plant the sweet leaf bush is ideal in zones one and two, ensuring a quick pick is available – allowing some bushes of course to be left untrimmed for berry production. Often after high rainfall (especially in Babinda!) my plants lean over, providing opportunity for new vertical shoots. With this leafy bush why not create a natural living hedge/fence, keeping it well pruned (eaten)

to provide a safe microclimate, shading tender plants behind it? Some countries even grow hedgerows for mass production of leaves and shoots. If space is an issue, a large patio pot would be ideal, or else use it as a feature in a small garden area. Why not plant a hedge just outside the chook house for poultry forage for its 34 percent protein content? Sweet leaf bush is definitely a great permaculture plant, multi-functional, heavy cropping, nutritious and attractive. Why would any gardener not have one in their backyard?

Jane (Many Leaves) Lawrance runs a variety of courses on sustainable living and can be heard on ABC Radio Far North on Tuesdays at 7.15 am. She can be contacted at PO Box 374, Babinda 4861.

## TALC POWDER ALTERNATIVE

Talcum powder is magnesium silicate, which is obtained by mining. It has soothing, absorbant and anti-chafing properties so is used in many baby powders and as a base for many powdered cosmetics. However, it is an irritant if inhaled and there is some evidence of toxicity if it is absorbed through the skin. So an alternative. . .

- 1/2 cup rice flour
- 1/2 cup cornflour
- 1 tbsp orris root
- 10 drops lavender oil
- 8 drops sandalwood oil
- drops of geranium oil

Mix ingredients together and put through a sieve two or three times. Store in a shaker container or a box and apply with cotton balls.

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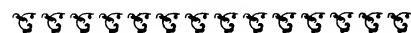
Email: [kyrhet@bigpond.com.au](mailto:kyrhet@bigpond.com.au)

Website: <http://minicattle.virtualave.net>



## FLOOR CLEANER

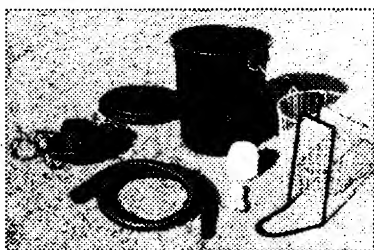
Add 1 cup of vinegar to half a bucket of warm water for an effective cleaner for lino, ceramic tiled or slate floors.



## PAINT FUMES

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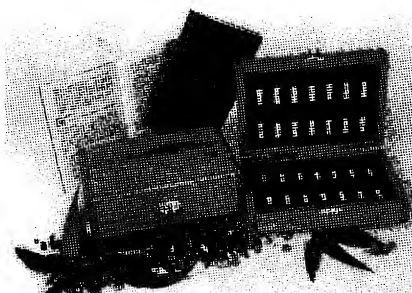
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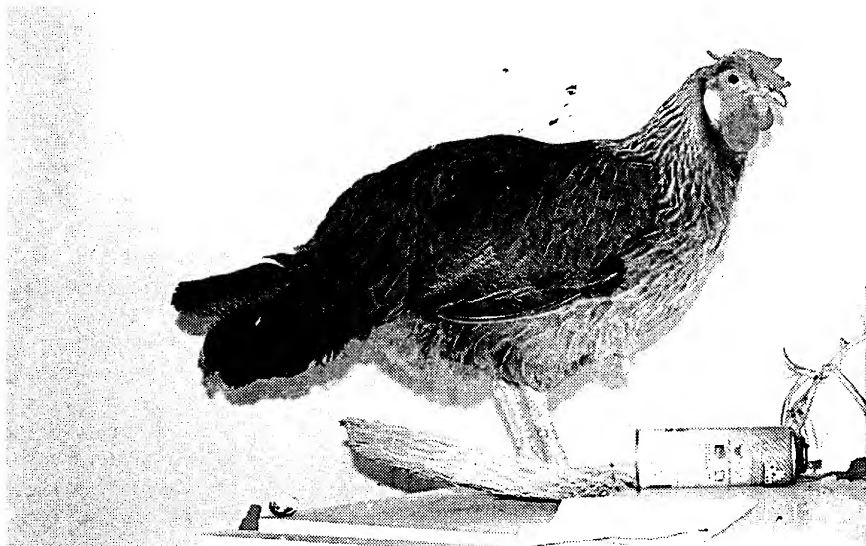
Such as allergies, burns, colds, colic, conjunctivitis, coughs, croup, cuts, cystitis, diarrhoea, earache, food poisoning, flu, haemorrhoids, headache, injuries, indigestion, insect bite, insomnia, jet lag, nausea, panic attacks, period pain, PMS, scalding, sciatica, skin problems, shock, sore throat, thrush, tonsillitis, teething, travel sickness, wounds...

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I never thought the time would arrive when I'd be singing the praises of daylight saving. Moans and groans have accompanied the reluctant turning forward of the clock in the past, in anticipation of months of tiresome work watering and feeding in the late afternoon sun, or trying to persuade fowls to return to their houses for lockup while it's still daylight. Imagine trying to convey to a flock of geese the urgency of getting off the dam and returning home immediately, despite the early hour, because I have a meeting to attend that evening. The local foxes become insatiably hungry around November each year, probably because they are feeding young, and to leave pens unsecured or a flock of birds to wander home at dusk unsupervised would be putting temptation in front of them. The extended evenings of daylight saving, I always swore, were designed for the beach and barbecue brigade and not the humble chook keeper.

What's brought about the sudden change in thinking? Now that I'm working out in the wider world and travelling some distance to the office, I get home late and really appreciate having a few hours to unwind and do outdoor chores while it's still light. I can work back for an hour or so and still get home before nightfall. After months of performing the evening jobs by torch beam it's lovely to see the pig as she's fed and not just hear her, and to look for the offending branches hanging down that have been poking out my eyes or shredding clothing. Being at home to see the sunset and hear the magpies' final chorus is a delight in itself and the best reward for surviving silly drivers on the road and the stresses of the day.

Some evenings there is time to tackle tasks from the list of long-neglected jobs. Top priority is managing poultry poo. There is always a shed (or two or three) due for cleaning out and in the last month or so a mess has built up where patient ganders sat awaiting the outcome of their maies' month of sitting. It was a mite dangerous attempting to rake this up when the geese were still on their nests, but now they're all flocked up again it's time to collect the nest debris and mounds of fibrous droppings. It's beautiful material for the garden and one job I never mind doing.



Caught out! Where else would you find a hen trying to nest in a bread basket on top of a fridge? Life on this farm is certainly never dull.

Walking around the sheds at twilight recently I noticed headlights moving slowly in an adjacent paddock and could just catch the chug-chug of a tractor hard at work. One of the neighbours must have been cutting hay. I was immediately consumed with envy – fancy being able to work on until the job was finished irrespective of the light. There are definite limitations to working by torch beam! It's considered fine and noble for a farmer to plough or cut grass in the middle of the night, but if you or I floodlit the garden or used the mower in the dark we would probably become the focus for local discussion and labelled eccentric. I happen to be sensitive about the issue of eccentricity, so when the problem of squeezing in the mowing of grass out front arose several times I pushed aside the obvious thought, why not cut it at night? Firstly the ride-on doesn't have lights, but also it would be embarrassing being caught out.

Desperation can weaken the best of intentions and so at ten-thirty one night when the moon was full and visibility excellent, I cast aside caution and cranked up the ride-on mower. By the light of the full moon I wove an erratic path up and down the front verge cutting grass. When oncoming lights warned of an approaching vehicle I discreetly waited under the overhanging branches of the peppercorn trees and then continued

with the cutting. It may not have been the most uniform mowing you've seen, but it provided a tidier appearance and knocked down the areas of long grass which gave camouflage for secluded guinea fowl nests. Unfortunately, such nests are soon discovered by roaming foxes. The verge needs mowing again, especially the grass missed last time, but to do it justice I'll have to get out there during the day. It's too long to wait until the next full moon!

The punnets I mentioned planting out with a miscellany of old seeds last issue germinated surprisingly well, but plead to be transplanted each time they're watered. Soon, soon! Some poor brave violas have started flowering and the lettuce in another is almost ready to harvest. This is not the sort of gardening I had in mind. When the deadlines are out of the way I'll take some time off and transplant these seedlings. Clearly I wasn't intending sowing or buying more plants, but when an opportunity arose to get some old-fashioned favourites I said 'yes'. Gareth, a young friend who had moved away from the district earlier in the year, was home for a week or two and invited me to collect some bits and pieces from his garden. He would even pot them up. I arrived on the Saturday morning and was met by a grey-faced invalid who owned up to a hard night the previous evening. It must have been, as potting up

hadn't started and all he could do was sit and direct me or make sudden trips off into the bushes. The garden was one of those lovely old ones from yesteryear and it is to Gareth's credit that when he lived there he maintained it well. I dug and cut to my heart's content and when I left an hour or so later he wanly escorted me to the car as I struggled under my bounty. 'Thank God I'm past the age of party binging,' I thought.

Actually, Gareth and I had shared a meal earlier in the week. He had stopped by and we'd popped into the old GR office before going out. I'd noticed a chook following us in and tried to locate her before locking up. She's one of those smart birds that are always first for a treat and think nothing of hopping into the car if a door is left ajar. Returning from dinner we went back into the office to collect a book and by chance I glanced into the kitchenette. There was the chook bedded down in the bread basket on top of the fridge, looking mighty ridiculous. I slipped out for the camera and took a couple of shots, but no picture could convey how awkward and foolish she looked. I'd like to think she's learnt her lesson, but all the same I carefully close the door after me now.

This chook must be one of the few hens that hasn't slipped away to hatch out chickens. All the layers seem to be making a concerted effort to increase their flagging numbers. Each week a hen pops out from somewhere with a few irresistible chicks and, even allowing for accidents and wily crows, a healthy number of replacement birds are on the way. There is just one problem – when I deliberately set a hen, substituting purebred eggs for the Heinz variety, the hatch rate is poor. Leave the hens to do their thing and all eggs hatch. The trouble, of course, is that I don't want any more Heinz hens.

After mentioning Merle the old sheep, last issue we got talking in the office about her and the antics she got up to in pursuit of food or gaining admittance to the turkey sheds. I'm surprised she didn't die young from a head injury – she was very naughty in her earlier years. 'How old is she?', Mary asked and we had to look through past issues of GR to find out. Merle is ten, a grand age for a sheep, having been adopted prior to the Melbourne Royal in 1989. No wonder she is such a funny odd creature now. I can detect a deterioration in her mental and physical health that wasn't observable a year ago, so her time is running out.

After rain recently, I decided to trim back her feet while they were softened and discovered she had a tiny spot of fly strike. Back to the house to collect spray, powder and scissors, plus the torch as it was close to dusk, and then into the shed with grain to catch the victim. Poor Merle. I ended up spending about an hour cutting and cleaning, the humid weather being responsible for the initial attack and age-related incontinence exacerbating it. I plied her with pieces of bread, a treat she adores, to aid recovery and there have been no further signs of an outbreak. I doubt she will make it through the long hot summer and will miss her greatly, she's been here so long she's become an institution. It will, however, be nice to have the doors on the turkey sheds fixed and know they won't be immediately vandalised.

On a far more cheery note, my own lamb – Suni – is settling back into everyday life after her overseas trip. Suni and friend Marcel had a wonderful trip, but were glad to return to our warm climate. The cold in Europe was unbelievable, 'it just cut right through you,' and they stayed in such diverse accommodation that they 'could sleep anywhere now'. It didn't seem fair to test

their latter theory when they visited. A few mornings previously I'd been woken up by an awful noise – a possum was in the wall adjoining Suni's room, scratching as though he was lousy. Far better to be woken up by the dulcet tones of a rooster than a possum just a few centimetres from your head.

She brought back a couple of presents for me. 'Did you get chocolate,' I asked? 'No, books of course. You won't be able to put them down,' she beamingly promised. 'I couldn't. Sorry they're a bit thumbled but I read them first!' It's reassuring that children never really change. I won't need a cache of books for Christmas – I'll have these thick tomes to get through. We haven't made plans for anything special this year, Christmas festivities will be rather spontaneous. Time to spend with friends and family and to enjoy my books on the verandah, that's all I'll be asking for. Naturally, I won't say no to chocolate!

## PENPALS

Hi my name is Kaya. I like singing, playing, drawing and music. My age is 8. I go to Cape Byron Steiner School. I would like a girl of my own age to write back.

**Kaya Edwards**

**C/- GR, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Hello my name is Rosemary. I am 46 and I have many hobbies and interests, especially crafts and reading. I am willing to write to males and females any age. Please write, all letters will be answered.

**Mrs Rosemary Carlton**

**7 Abbey Close, St Albans 3021.**

I am a 27 year old single Melbourne guy whose interests include travelling, the outdoors, cooking, music and more. I would like to correspond with females of similar ages and interests.

**Adrian**

**PO Box 5085, Heathwood 3134.**

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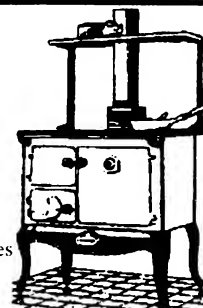
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**FAR NORTH COAST**, 20 mins Murwillumbah, 150 mins Brisbane, 18 ac, 10 mins school, shops. School bus passes property. N/E aspect. Unique pole/timber house, beautiful views, solar power, gas fridge, stove. Block completely fenced with many f/trees. Not part of commune. Company title. Two water tanks, 6500 & 1000 gal cap, perm dam, all-year perm crk on company block. Much more. Tractor with implements incl. \$149,000, owner's finance. Ph: 02-6674-2509, or 07-5536-2682.

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**BATHURST/SOFALA**, 3 comfortable houses on 297 undulating Turon Riverfront ac. Established orchard with 50 stone f/trees, 2 triple-bay farm sheds, cool room etc. Oakley Crk on west and south borders. Wildlife, platypus. \$285,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6337-7121.

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**DORRIGO HINTERLAND**, outside sml village, 25 mins Dorrigo, 50 mins Bellingen, 3 b/r mud brick/timber home on 24 ac with perm crk, pump, 36,000 l/r water, extensive garden, shed. \$170,000. Ph: 02-6657-8151.

**HUNTER VALLEY, HOBBY FARM**, 20 ac. crk frontage, sheds, old house, dairy. \$190,000. Ph: 02-6574-1204.

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**GRAFTON THIRTY-SIX KILOMETRES**, nth NSW coast, 5 ac bush, house, dam, shed, s/bus. \$28,000. Ph: 02-6644-8019.

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**TWO-BEDROOM CABIN**, 80.3 ha in picturesque valley surrounded by nat pks, 45 mins Merimbula airport. Electricity, ph, sewerage, fully fenced, part irrigated pastures, 180 wine grapes, orchard. \$172,000. Or, 40 ha fenced \$52,000. Ph: 02-6496-7009.

**ECO PROPERTIES**, ph: 02-9528-8614, or [www.eco.com.au](http://www.eco.com.au)

**NYMBOIDA, HILLY BUSH BLOCK**, 365 ac, good access, near village facilities, must sell. \$80,000. Ph: 02-6582-5785.

**NORTHERN NSW**, 2 ac f/hold strata, park-like garden with cosy immaculate character brick home, 3 b/r, solar/gen power, 2 x 5000 gal w/tanks, c/port, f/trees, pool. Kyogle/Lismore 30 mins, nat pks/beaches 60 mins. \$95,000. Ph: 02-6633-7022.

**FAR SOUTH COAST, MERIMBULA AREA**, 20 mins from coast, 1 hr from snow, 150 ac set in beautiful bushland with lge 5 b/r, rumpus, family home, mud brick/timber. Polished timber floors, cathedral ceilings, modern kitchen, central courtyard. Forty ac semi-cleared, 3 dams, cabin, virgin r/forest gully, state forest one border. \$295,000. Ph: 02-6494-2187, 02-6495-4740.

**NORTH COAST NSW**, 4 b/r Queenslander on 15 frost/flood-free ac. Open plan home, combustion fire, ceiling fans, fenced yard, solid dairy bales + extra sheds, 2 dams, easement to perm crk with electric pump, sealed access road, 20 mins to Lismore, 2 mins to daycare, primary school & community hall. Asking \$153,000 ONO. Call 02-6688-8210.

**PILLAR VALLEY**, 25 mins, Grafton, 15 mins Woolli, Minnie Water, 27 ac, split-block, 2 b/r house. Automatic solar/generator power. Fuel stove with water heater, gas fridge & stove. Ride-on mower. Inground 8 m saltwater pool. Nine thousand gal water tanks, 5 dams. School bus. \$130,000. Ph: owners, 02-6644-8203.

**LAND, BURRAGATE NSW**, 8½ ac, ½ hr from Pambula, ½ hr from Eden. Trees planted, huge dam, ideal country living. \$28,000. Ph: 04-2993-1570.

**INVERELL TWENTY-FIVE ACRES**, 4 b/r B/V Cape Cod + 1 b/r granny flat attached, 3 sheds, 4 tanks. Small orchard, 160 blueberries. All farming equipment, incl tractor 220 hrs, ride-on 5 speed. Suited olives, herbs etc. School bus 700 m, 6 km town. \$168,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6721-0123.

**TUMBULGUM**, 15 mins sth of Tweed Heads. Close to beautiful Tweed River, 2 – 3 b/rs, 2 sewer toilets, private double block. Ample shedding, lge c/port. Historic building, built 1886. Renovated, incl all plumbing & electrical. Solid home with character. \$135,000. Ph: 02-6676-6311.

### PLACING AN AD?

See page 73 for details

**SECLUSION ON FAR SOUTH COAST**, 120 ac, crk frontage, 3 b/r mud brick house (solar passive, pine lined, insulated, s/c/stove), studio, machinery shed, power, ph, f/trees. Irrigation licence, million gal dam. Commercial compost worm farm. Approximately ¼ suitable farming, remainder hilly bushland adjoining nat pk. Lots of wildlife. Five km village, 40 km Merimbula, 50 km Bega. \$178,000. Ph: owners, 02-6494-2202.

**MID NORTH COAST NSW**, Upper Taylors Arm, secluded 412 ac river flats surrounded by mountains, some r/forest, perm water, yards, paddocks, tanks, pump, basic farm equip, good growing area. Old farmhouse needs renovation, own timber avail. Power, solar, internet connect. Asking \$170,000. Ph: 08-9228-8408.

**LAND TWENTY MINUTES FROM WINDSOR NSW**, 40 ac with running water & lge trees. North facing building site. Some flat land. Surrounded by state forest. \$80,000. Ph: owner, 02-4575-5242.

**SPECIAL – ILL HEALTH AND AGE** force sale of 2 super bush blocks in the coastal hills inland from Eden near Vic/NSW border. Handy to snowfields, very handy to fabulous beaches from Merimbula to Mallacoota. Good soil, perm water, abundant wildlife, mild climate, 220 ac riverfront, 120 ac crkfront. Valued at \$145,000 and \$95,000. Sale at \$225,000 for 2 fell through. Will consider all reasonable offers. Ph: 02-4784-1020.

**MISSABOTTI VIA NAMBUCCA HEADS**, 2 b/r stabilised mud brick house meticulously built with wooden floors and ceilings surrounded by 8 ft verandahs. Slow combustion stove with hot water, 43 NE fertile ac, incl crk flats, Crystal clear tree-lined perm stream with swimming holes. Three phase elec pump. Excellent fencing, cattle yards, double garage shed. Magnificent views. \$218,000. Ph: 02-6564-7361.

**MID NORTH COAST**, 19 km to town of Bowraville, 119 ac bush block, perm crk, natural springs, sml pocket of r/forest, several home sites, power & ph avail, \$63,000. Ph: 02-6568-8214.

## QUEENSLAND

**ATHERTON TABLELANDS, QLD**, 42 ha r/forest hideaway, secluded, private, comfortable dwelling. Abundant flora & fauna, eg – tree climbing kangaroos, cassowary etc. A very rare property. Price \$179,000. Contact: Richardson & Wrench Malanda on 07-4096-5666.

**RIVER FRONTAGE**, 5 ac on isolated stretch of Condamine River near Warwick. Tall river gums, rich, grow-anything soil, 2 hrs Brisbane/Gold Coast. \$44,000. Vendor terms – \$2000 deposit, \$85 pw. Ph: Howard, 02-6646-3733, Wayne, 07-3262-6050.

**THIRTY ACRE MOUNTAIN TOP**, overlooking state forest – 1 hr Brisbane, Forest Hill. Power, ph, easy 4 wheel access. \$85,000. Vendor terms – \$5000 deposit, \$200 pw till paid. Ph: 02-6646-3733, or 07-3262-6050.

**PERFECT RETREAT** – isolated 5 ac, natural forest near Warwick Queensland. Power, ph. \$24,000. Owner terms to anyone – \$500 deposit, \$65 pw. Ph: Wayne, 07-3262-6050, Howard, 02-6646-3733.

**NORTH EAST, GYMPIE**, ½ hr Tin Can Bay, Rainbow Beach, 100 ac fenced, plenty grass & water dams, crk, 40 ac cleared, steel cattle yards, box 30 ft shed, 5000 gal water tank, 3-phase power, ph, sealed road, school bus, 7 km to Gunulda, shopping centre, hotel, etc. \$115,000. All offers considered. Ph: 07-3266-4952.

**FORTY ACRES NEAR GIN GIN**, elevated block, 50% fenced. Cleared house sites, ph, perm spring, sml dam. \$30,000 ONO. Ph: 08-9537-1100. Email: [belcoast@southwest.com.au](mailto:belcoast@southwest.com.au)

**WILD CATTLE ISLAND**, an idyllic lifestyle. Freehold land home and granny flat. Solar powered. See article this issue. \$250,000. Ph: 07-4972-1594.

**FIVE ACRES** on Whitsunday Coast, fully fenced, vg bore water, estab veg & fruit gardens. All-weather driveway, clean 26 ft c/van with annexe, power/ph connected. Close to school, PO, store, beaches. \$50,000. Ph: 07-4947-5868.

**GIN GIN**, income producing 26 ac, 3 b/r mod home, all facilities, 1¼ ac table grapes, 6 ac sml crops & cut flowers, machinery, good bore, valley views. \$145,000. Ph: 07-4157-1004 AH.

**CRYSTAL WATERS PERMACULTURE VILLAGE**, Maleny, SE Qld, 2 bed timber house, shingle roof, good loft spaces, solar & mains, composting toilet, 2 potbelly stoves, lge entertaining area, SC cabin & c/port, beautiful gardens on level 1.12 ac, all council approved. \$110,000. Ph: 07-3366-0629, or send email to [brenda@ecn.net.au](mailto:brenda@ecn.net.au)

**SOUTH-EAST QLD, KILLARNEY**, 2½ Brisbane, ½ Warwick. Exchange or sale, ½ ac house block, all amenities, terms considered. \$10,000. Ph: 07-4666-1699.

**RAINFOREST**, 1.03 ha, large fan palms, ferns, surrounded by nat pk, ph, no elec, 1 hr nth Cairns. Discounted to \$25,500 until 31/12/99 for quick sale. Ph: 07-4941-7694, 07-4156-3038.

**CHILDERS**, 4½ ac, good virgin soil, dam, sml forest, 3 b/r b/v house, town water, dbl garage. Rental income. \$7000 pa. \$99,500. Ph: 07-4126-8260.

**COOROY, NOOSA HINTERLAND**, 5 ac, 4 b/r, nth faced, 3 sided veranda, steel framed. Fenced into paddocks with yards, 3-phase irrigation system, 12 x 6 m shed, orchard, chicken coop. Ph: 07-5442-6141.

**AMPITHEATRE, GREAT WATER CATCHMENT** potential, 30 ac, 15 mins Gin Gin, 45 mins Bundaberg. Partly fenced, fertile soil, excel views, cleared/wooded areas. Good for macadamias, pawpaws, olives, others. \$35,000. Ph: 02-6550-4513.

**DARLING DOWNS**, beautiful native bushland, wildlife, 32½ ac. Three hrs to Brisbane. Perfect getaway location. \$30,000 ONO, will consider swap for Vic or southern NSW location. Ph owner: 03-5767-2397.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE QUEENSLAND

**CABOOLTURE/WAMURAN**, quaint 70 yr old, 4 b/r cottage, 1 ac fruit/native trees, veg, DLUG f/fenced surrounding acreage. Forty-five mins Brisbane CBD, 15 mins Kmart, 2 mins PO, country retreat. \$125,000. Ph: 07-5496-6707.

**RARE OPPORTUNITY MAGNETIC ISLAND**, two storey, 4 b/r on 1/4 ac with i/ground pool. Reluctant sale. \$255,000 ONO. Zoning is suitable for future approved bed & breakfast business. Can assist in obtaining permit if required. Details ph: Jennifer, 07-4778-4176 after 7pm or write: PO Box 109, Picnic Bay 4819.

**SAPPHIRE, CENTRAL QUEENSLAND GEM-FIELDS**, 2 b/r home on 1/2 ac f/hold land. Power, town water, nothing to spend. \$65,000 or exchange for acreage in the Gympie Hinterland. Ph: owner, 015-119-432.

**NANANGO NINE ACRES**, partly cleared, 2 dams, old shack. Power avail. \$22,000, low deposit, vendor finance. Ph: 02-6585-9310.

**MAGICAL RETREAT TABLELANDS**, 36 ac, 3 b/r house, garage, pool, solar power, r/water tank, alternative lifestyle, overlooking river, unique climate. \$260,000. Ph: 07-4096-2492.

**SELLHEIM, FIFTEEN MINUTES TO CHAR-TERS TOWERS**, block home on Burdekin River. Paradise, 45 ac, plenty water, beautiful river spot, f/trees, water licenses. \$170,000. Ph: 07-4787-1933.

**ECO PROPERTIES**, ph: 02-9528-8614, or [www.eco.com.au](http://www.eco.com.au)

**CAPRICORN COAST HINTERLAND**, 2 1/2 ac, fenced, undulating, virgin soil, 2 b/r dwelling (9 x 9 m lined shed), with BI kitchen, open plan living area, sep bathroom/laundry. Septic, power, ph, 2000 gal r/water tank & springwater bore, 12 mins to Yeppoon. School bus to gate. \$99,000 ONO. Ph: 07-4939-7355.

**MAREEBA AREA**, 115 ac + 50 ac leased. Improved pasture, 88 meg water allocation, 3 phase irrigation pump, automatic water troughs, 4 dams. Walsh River frontage, Price Creek. Livestock shelters, stables, poultry, piggyery pens. Large sheds, workshops, aircon living quarters. Established gardens, 3 b/r home, 2 mins to school, shop & post office. Suit live-stock, crops, farmstay lifestyle. \$320,000. Ph: 07-4093-1025.

**APPLETREE CREEK NEAR CHILDERS**, 9.9 ha, timbered, 2 dams, workshop, sheds, fowl pen, greenhouse, 2 b/r cottage. Good sale for small crops, suit someone seeking alternative lifestyle. \$80,000 ONO. Ph: 07-4126-2375.

**FINCH HATTON GORGE**, 45 ac, beautiful views, very private, springs, fenced, walk to swimming holes & Eungella Nat Pk. \$90,000. Ph: 07-4958-3398.

**PERFECT RETREAT**, isolated 5 ac natural open country, scattered shade trees, 2 hrs Brisbane. Power, ph. \$32,000. Owner terms to anyone. \$500 deposit, \$65 pw. A new lge hay shed extra \$20 pw. Wayne, 07-3262-6050.

DEADLINES: GR137 – DEC 20TH  
GR138 – FEB 28TH

**RIVER FRONTAGE** 5 ac on isolated stretch of Condamine River near Warwick. Tall river gums, rich soil, 2 hrs Brisbane/Gold Coast. \$48,000. Owner terms – \$2000 dep, \$85 pw. Howard, 02-6646-3733, or Wayne 07-3262-6050.

**AGNES WATERS**, 4 ac, beautiful bush country, high block, views, house pad & road, 5 mins to beach. Power, ph avail. \$47,000 ONO. Ph: 07-4161-1054.

**HILL TOP HIDEAWAY** – 40 ac overlooking state forest, 1 hr Brisbane, 1 1/2 hrs Gold Coast. Located at Forest Hill between Brisbane & Toowoomba. River soil, mostly virgin forest, ideal dam/lake sites. Vendor terms – \$5000 dep, \$200 pw till paid. Ph: 02-6646-3733, or 07-3262-6050.

## VICTORIA

**EAST GIPPSLAND**, 15 mins east of Lakes Entrance, 30 secluded, cleared ac with perm crk running through property. Adjacent to state forest, 4 b/r cedar home, solar & generator power, ample shedding & new stockyards. \$180,000 ONO. Ph: 03-5155-7257.

**MUD BRICK COTTAGE**, double-storey, 4 ac, 2 b/r, alternative power, orchard, dam. Landsborough. \$42,000. Ph: 03-5472-5014.

**SOUTH-WEST VIC**, near Glenelg River, 38 ac, bushland, bus & dam, \$23,000, or \$2000 deposit \$220 per month vendor terms. Ph: 03-5562-3085.

**COMBIENBAR, EAST GIPPSLAND**, 2 b/r house with sunroom & lge bungalow on 5 ac. Carpets, insul, mains power, ph, gas cooker, elec HWS, wood heater, 33,000 lt water tanks, elec fences. Stunning outlook in secluded location. Perfect climate & excel r/fall. Dozens of ornamental & f/trees. \$72,500. Ph: 03-5158-5256.

**SOUTH GIPPSLAND**, secluded solid relocated 5 b/r home, gentle 2.5 ac, bush backdrop, views, wood heating, s/c/cooking, generator power, lge shed, dam. \$79,500. Ph: agent, 03-5668-1300.

**FOR SALE: MODERN FARMLET** (10 ac) 4.5 km from Maryborough. Large lounge, separate family room, 3 b/rs & full en suite, BIRs, cathedral ceiling in living area, slate floors, o/fire, solid fuel heater, Everhott solid fuel stove, 3 bay shed & bungalow. Ideal for vines, nut trees and/or permaculture. Town water & power. Watering systems. \$130,000. Ph: owner, 03-5461-4565 AH.

**SOUTH-WEST VICTORIA**, lake frontage, secluded nature lover's delight, 117 ac light volcanic country. Two hrs Melb, 1 hr Great Ocean Road. Abundant fresh water from springs. Four b/r Californian bungalow house, fully renovated in a lge estab garden, fully equipped dairy & sundry shedding. School bus at gate, 20 mins from local town. \$185,000. Ph: 03-5235-4215.

**FREE – COUNTRY PROPERTY CATALOGUE**, available now! Land from only \$5000. Ph: agent, 03-9852-3322.

**HEALESVILLE – STEP BACK TO NATURE** on 9 ac of bushland with magnif views of Yarra Valley. Ideal for country retreat. \$75,000. Vendor terms avail. Call Cellante Pty Ltd, 03-9850-7308.

**SOUTH GIPPSLAND**, peaceful 10 ac hobby farm or retreat, orchard, barns & shedding, fenced livestock areas, dams, 2 b/r BV home, wood heatirg, lge family/kitchen, lounge, deck-ing overlooking valley. Owners relocating overseas. \$105,000. Ph: agent 03-5668-1300.

**ECO PROPERTIES**, ph: 02-9528-8614, or [www.eco.com.au](http://www.eco.com.au)

**HEATHCOTE HIDEAWAYS**, by name, by nature. A great range of rural acres 1 1/4 hrs Melb. All blocks have elec. Ideal for weekend getaway. Call Perna Pty Ltd, 03-9850-7308.

**COCHRANES CREEK**, private & secluded 9 1/2 ac 3 hrs Melb. Fenced, seasonal crk & dam. Lovely old scattered gums. \$22,500. Terms avail. Call Zignet Pty Ltd, 03-9850-7308.

**KYNETON FARMLETS**, 5 ac of cleared land ready for your first crop, or keep your horses here, fenced, trees border it. Beautiful Kyneton township only 10 mins drive. Call Astvilla Pty Ltd, 03-9850-7308.

**LAKE LAANECOORIE**, 50 ac, only 1 km to Lake, crk on land. \$45,000. Ph: agent, 03-9852-3322.

**BARKLY BLOCK IN AVOCA** area 66' x 165' only \$9950 terms avail on \$1000 deposit & \$50 p/w. Ring now: agent, 03-9852-3322.

**BEALIBA, TEN ACRE PROPERTY**, fully fenced, building permit allowed, fronting the state forest – perfect for getaway for the week-end & relieve stress! Only \$22,500. Ph: agent, 03-9852-3322.

**ST ARNAUD GOOD TWENTY** ac, suit vines or olive trees. \$25,000 cash or terms on a third down, balance 5% interest 2 years. Ph: agent, 03-9852-3322.

**BERRINGA PASTURES**, the name says it all, undulating partly treed, 9 1/2, 20 & 40 ac properties close to school & township, starts \$45 per week TAP. Call Zignet Pty Ltd, 03-9850-7384.

**WANT TO GET AWAY** from the rat race? See the dawn break on a wonderful triangular block, in beautiful Daylesford country. All services close. \$40 per week TAP. Call Astvilla Pty Ltd, 03-9850-7384.

**WHO WANTS 20 ACRES** with character? Secluded undulating, a seasonal crk runs through this property. Near Lexton township, \$45 per week TAP. Call Astvilla Pty Ltd, 03-9850-7384.

**LUBECK, BETWEEN HORSHAM (35 km) AND STAWELL (40 km)**, 3 b/r w/b house & adjacent old store on 1 1/2 ac. \$35,000. Ph: 03-5383-8227.

**DEREEL, OWN YOUR OWN** peaceful bushy retreat away from the city. This extremely bushy 5 ac block with a building permit is ideal for those who want total seclusion. Call Cellante Pty Ltd, 03-9850-7384.

**MAROONA – BACKING THE HOPKINS RIVER** & close to the Grampians, this 6 ac block is perfect for fishing. Only \$19,500. Call Perna Pty Ltd, 03-9850-7308.

**WEDDERBURN**, this bushy 11.5 ac block with a building permit is ideal to build your dream get-away on. It has amazing views & can be yours for only \$35 per week TAP. Call Zignet Pty Ltd, 03-9820-7308.

Don't forget to include your area code with your phone number. Set it out as 00-0000-0000.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE

### VICTORIA

**MARYBOROUGH, LOVELY BIG EDWARDIAN** home, many extras. Suitable bed/breakfast – professional rooms. \$78,000. Ph: 03-5460-5592.

### TASMANIA

**NORTH-WEST TASMANIA**, 9.902 ha, f/hold, approx 1/2 area beautiful r/forest, remainder varied regrowth with lots of trees planted. Hut, s/c stove with hot water. Established vegie gardens, shrubs, f/trees, wood shed, chook house, basalt soil, good H<sub>2</sub>O supply. \$42,000. More info: H Lee, Lorinna, Tas 7306

**TASMANIA, UPPER ESK**, 3 b/r old timber house on 3.5 ac. Views of Mt Saddleback & Esk Valley. Mains power & ph. Sealed rd 10 mins to school bus & 50 mins to East Coast. \$35,000. Ph: 03-6377-1157, or 03-6327-4911.

**PRIVACY, COMFORT AND FABULOUS VIEWS** on 6 ac near Scottsdale, 4 b/r brick home, double garage, Rayburn Stove/solar /electric hot water. Pure, plentiful bore & r/water. Organic garden, orchard & vineyard. Detached studio & glasshouse. Potential for B & B or intensive horticulture, 20 km to beaches, 60 km from Launceston. \$129,000. Ph: 03-6352-2285.

**SOUTHERN TASMANIA, HUON VALLEY**, 4 1/2 ac, nth aspect, river view, 160 m elevation, driveway, fully serviced, winter crk gully – suit lge dam, 1 ac pasture – balance forest, good soil, building stone, firewood & bush poles. \$26,000. Ph: 03-6295-1826.

**COTTAGE ON TWELVE ACRES**, 8 km Deloraine, 2 b/rs, partly renovated, bush/pasture, 2 dams, great views, peaceful living. \$62,500. Fact sheet avail. Ph: 03-6362-3428.

**LUNE RIVER, ONE ACRE** (certified organic) with 1/2 ac raised garden beds. Fenced, dam, chook pen, sheds, hut, ph & power, 200 m from pristine river beside World Heritage Area. \$18,750. Ph: 03-6298-3291.

### NORTHERN TERRITORY

**EVA VALLEY NEAR BATCHELOR**, 250 ac natural bushland, billabongs, great potential at only \$85,000. Ph: 0417-806-899.

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**ECO PROPERTIES**, ph: 02-9528-8614 or [www.eco.com.au](http://www.eco.com.au)

**MYPOLONGA**, 20 mins Murray Bridge, 1 hr Adelaide, 11 ac fenced paddocks, mains water, house 3 b/r, study, verandahs, 6 car c/port, 28,000 gal r/water, garage/pit, 20 x 48 shade-house/shed. Beaut, views over Murray, 100s native trees, shrubs, suit olives, grapes. \$117,000 ONO. Ph: 08-8535-4163.

## COMMUNITIES/SHARES

**NIMBIN, FOURTEEN KILOMETRES**, 3 ac share in 370 ac MO, 2 bed, all wood pole house, loft, solar, ph, s/c stove, fridge, 10 yr garden, f/trees, shed, 10,000 gal in tanks + community water, \$75,000. Ph: 02-6685-3048.

### PLACING AN AD?

See page 73 for details

**FAR NORTH COAST NSW**, Lillfield Community, homes for sale on financially viable MO. Situated on 130 ha near Mt Warning, Brisbane 120 mins, Byron 80 mins, Nimbin 20 mins, Lismore 45 mins, Murwillumbah 45 mins. Next door to excel state primary school & 10 mins to Steiner primary school. No cats or dogs. Good internal roads, 11 dams. Bush regeneration is well advanced with much wildlife. Spiritual nurturing by respecting each other & our land. Please ring 02-6689-7394, 02-6689-7584, or email [arthur@nor.com.au](mailto:arthur@nor.com.au)

**SECLUDED RETREAT**, only 3 hrs west of Sydney CBD. One b/r cottage with northerly aspect, views, tank water, gas fridge, stove, hot water, wood heaters (2), ph, currently no power, beautiful garden with roses, bulbs, herbs etc. Share property of 560 ac, 13 sites, each 1/2 ha, with dams, roads, fencing, bore water, school bus at gate. \$80,000. Ph: 02-6352-2083 or 02-9620-7120.

**NORTH ROCKHAMPTON, QUEENSLAND**, 50 ac share in 100 ac property. Some finance avail. Good supply of quality bore water, power, fully fenced. Council approval for second dwelling – suit persons interested in permaculture. \$30,000. Ph: 018-531-631.

**TWEED VALLEY**, 1/11 share of 186 ac. Organised friendly community, small comfortable dwelling, 5000 gal concrete water tank, 1000 gal header tank, 2 dams, gas hot water, stove & fridge. Solar power, NE aspect, beautiful views. \$70,000. Ph: Kim, 02-6679-5434.

**FAR NORTH COAST NSW**, 30 km nth of Tabulam, 1/22 share in 6400 ac community, 20 ac share with 3 b/r home, verandahs, solar power, ph, 20,000 gal r/water, dams, organic garden, lge, mature f/orchard, sheds, workshop, chook house, abundant wildlife. \$95,000. Ph: 02-6666-1270 evenings.

**A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY** to be one of 22 shareholders in a 6500 ac, semi-wilderness property. Ten km river frontage incl junction of Cataract & Clarence Rivers. 20 ac home sites the remainder common land. Purchased 1969. Owned and freeholded. \$25,000. Ph: 02-6666-1436.

**FERNBROOK, DORRIGO**, communities, share for sale. Rainforest home on 1/2 share 120 ac estab community. Double storey 3 b/r timber house 3/4 completed (to lock-up stage). Fully timber lined (cypress pine), insulated & wired upstairs. Elevated views, excel access, 240V mains elect, immaculate bore water, private position, new HWS. Property bordered by Little Murray River. Share also incl 1/2 cleared fertile paddock, 5 mins to school bus, 15 mins Dorrigo. \$67,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6653-8266.

Please print your ad clearly  
so we can do likewise

**MOUNT WALSH NATIONAL PARK**, sale by tender of 2 x 1/20 shares in a 1300 ac environment community. Environment company policy conditions apply. Tenders close 31st December, 1999. Successful tender will be granted a licence for personal use of a 10 ac family unit entitlement & enjoyment of rest of environment property. Contact: Company Secretary, Utopia E R P/L, 336 Utopia Road, Brooweena, Qld 4620. Ph: 07-4129-9032. Email: [bern33@bigpond.com](mailto:bern33@bigpond.com)

## BUSINESS FOR SALE

**YOGA SCHOOL** south side Brisbane. Well estab. \$6500. House with yoga studio optional extra. Ph: 07-3892-2171.

**GENERAL STORE** situated 300 km east of Perth in heritage building. Business consists: groceries, fresh fruit, vegetables, newsagency and Lotto agency. Town has hospital, swimming pool, primary school (high school 15 mins), but enjoys quality leisurely country life with variety of sports to suit young and old. Shop has accom at rear which needs attention. As business has been in family for 33 yrs we are looking for someone to continue to provide service to our community. For further particulars please ph: 08-9889-1151 after hours.

**HEALTH FOOD SHOP**, Hawkesbury area, bulk foods, supplements, aromatherapy products. Distributor for range of animal products. \$35,000 WIWO. Ph: 02-4579-9332 AH.

## FOR RENT/

### CARETAKER WANTED

**COUNTRY COTTAGE/RETREAT** 1 1/2 hrs Brisbane, 1/2 hr Warwick, very quiet, tank water, power, ph, \$70 pw. Ph: 07-4666-1699.

**TRUSTWORTHY MATURE PERSON**, caretaking, gardening, south coast NSW, cabin accom, low rental. Ph: 02-4457-1514.

**SHEFFIELD TASMANIA**, sunny, very neat, fully furnished 2 – 3 b/r home on 1 ac. Rural, with superb mountain view. Long term preferred. \$125/wk. Ph: 07-5424-2284.

**PERSON(S) TO SHARE/RENT** house, c/van, peaceful Hunter bush block, 60 km Newcastle. Terms neg. Ph: 02-4938-2036.

## SWAP/EXCHANGE

**WATERFRONT, GOLD COAST FREEHOLD** shop, exchange for Tasmanian Property, Luxury 4WD or what have you? Cruiser? Ph: 07-4778-4176. Request Jennifer.

## WANTED TO RENT/ CARETAKE

**HERVEY BAY**, couple saving for own land seeks caretaking/low rent property. We have own c/van if necessary. Keen to estab or help with garden. Garth Camac, 15 Crescent Street, Urangan, HERVEY BAY 4655. Ph: 0417-806-012.

**COUPLE RENOVATING**, seek immediate house-sit in Melbourne – Northcote, Thornbury area. Ph: 0412-496-150.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY WANTED

**RETIRED STOCK/DAIRY FARMER** requires dwelling to rent/buy, long term, have limited means. Could check stock, fences, minor caretaking. SE Qld or N Rivers preferred but open to suggestions. Please write: Allan, 11 Cliff St, NORAH HEAD 2263.

**WE ARE SEEKING TO LEASE** a minimum of 30 ha of land within Victoria or southern NSW for the purpose of establishing a trial planting of an experimental crop. The land we are seeking should not previously have had superphosphate added to it. We require good fences & a reliable water supply of approx 5 megalitres per annum. The lease payment we envisage would be 1% of the property value per month, for a period of 2 years. We also require an option to purchase at the end of the lease agreement. Please address all offers to: Bahilda Lodge, 109-111 Mcfees Rd, DANDENONG 3175.

**LAND WANTED**, around 5+ ac, with or without a dwelling. Murwillumbah area. Vendor finance or rent/buy arrangement required. Reliable income, small deposit & excel references. Contact us at: jpbgrandon@dingoblue.net.au, or PO Box 954, MULLUMBIMBY 2482.

**APPROXIMATELY FIVE ACRES**, river frontage, land & ocean access from block, utilities unimportant, between Maryborough & Townsville, northerly aspect. Inspecting March 2000, Cash avail now for suitable block. Reply to: K Barber, PO Box 597, MUSWELLBROOK 2333.

## OPPORTUNITIES

**WANTED, TWENTY-NINE PEOPLE** to get paid \$\$\$ to lose up to 15 kg. Ph: 03-9726-5860.

**ANY UNEMPLOYED ASTROLOGERS** interested in forming a cosmic school? NE NSW/Qld. Explore possibilities. PO Box 1361, CLEVELAND 4163.

**INDEPENDENT PERSON TO SHARE WITH** family a lge passive solar house, 150 km west of Sydney. Daily electric train to Sydney. Close to Lithgow, Bathurst. Blue Mts, Wollemi & Gardens of Stone Nat Pks. Four ha+, vegetable gardens, orchard, animals etc. Ph: 02-6355-5144.

**WE HAVE SEPARATE LARGE COTTAGE** 1½ hrs Brisbane ½ Warwick, acreage, comprehensive workshop facilities, Hydroponics growing set-up, p/w Internet linked. We need joint venture, home-based business partner/s. Ph: 07-4666-1699

**COULD USE EXTRA HANDS** on Recreation Camping Farm. BYO accom in return for free stay. Rural handypersons willing to lend a hand. Kids & some pets OK. Picturesque spot. NW Gympie. Ph: Keri, 07-5484-2146.

## PUBLICATIONS

**'NATIVE STINGLESS BEES'** for profit or pleasure – how to get started, Pollination/honey potential in Queensland. Detailed info booklets, packed with photographs, diagrams. For free catalogue, send name, address & 45c stamp to: ANBRC, Box 74-G4, NORTH RICHMOND 2754.

DEADLINES: GR137 – DEC 20TH  
GR138 – FEB 28TH

**'NIMBIN NEWS MAGAZINE'**, is a co-operatively run access magazine with articles & information from Nimbin and other areas. We cover concerns relevant to alternative lifestyles & others looking for the most sustainable way. We are one of the longest running alternative magazines & the Nimbin bioregion is at the forefront in the development of sustainable systems. As networkers we scan many mags for suitable & scarce information for our readers. Subscription: 6 editions for \$18, sample \$3.50. Back copies 5 for \$12 posted. PO Box 209, NIMBIN 2480. **'EARTHLINK'** is Australia's environmental products and services directory. For your copy call 0500-532-784, or surf [www.earthlink.com.au](http://www.earthlink.com.au)

**BOOKS, MAGAZINES** on almost every subject, also fiction titles. Preloved & new. Monthly lists avail. Bookmania, Box 496E, MORISSET, 2264. Ph: 02-4970-5694.

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**HOME EDUCATION**, for info send SSAE to: Alternative Education Resource Group, PO Box 71, CHIRNSIDE PARK 3116.

**'NEW VEGETARIAN & NATURAL HEALTH'**, the magazine of the Natural Health & Vegetarian Societies. Subscribe today, \$30 yearly and receive: 4 vital magazines, discounts at participating health food stores and natural therapies practitioners, listed in magazine. Head Office, 28/541 High St, PENRITH, NSW 2750. Ph: 0247-215-068.

**STEINER HOME SCHOOLING?** A teaching manual by Alan Whitehead on Creativity and Curriculum. Send \$12 to: Golden Beetle Books, Box 33 BRUNSWICK HEADS 2483. Ph: 02-6680-3889, fax: 02-6680-4314. Visa/Mastercard. [www.users.bigpond.com/goldenbeetlebooks/](http://www.users.bigpond.com/goldenbeetlebooks/) **BOOKS, NEW AND OLD.** Australiana, lifestyle, Pacific, biography, horticulture, gardening, outdoors. Lists avail. BA & JM Wallace, Box 325, PORTLAND 3305.

## HANDCRAFTS

**BEADS! BEADS! BEADS!** Unique selections of handmade glass, metal and wooden beads. Also findings, threads and kits available. Cost \$8 for samples, colour copy and info. Write to: Tsunami, PO Box 129, WALPOLE 6398.

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**CRAFT WORKSHOP VIDEOS:** Learn at home at your own pace from your personal, highly qualified instructor. VHS titles include spinning, weaving, beadwork, basketry, applique, tatting, knitting, crochet, lacemaking, felting, fabric painting and more. For full catalogue send long SAE to: Quick Spin Wool, Dept GR, RMB 1215, Shelford Rd, MEREDITH 3333. Ph/fax: 03-5286-8224.

## HEALTH & BEAUTY

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These natural soaps are suitable for people who have sensitive or problem skin. For a product brochure send SAE to: Bushcraft Soaps, Lot 3 Counter Rd, M/S 591, GYMPIE 4570. Ph: 07-5486-7299.

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**FRAGRANT OILS, MASSAGE OILS**, potpourri, dried lavender, clay face masks, facial scrubs, bubble bath, bath salts etc. All natural vegetable oil soaps. Send SAE or ph Harvest Botanicals for free price list on 03-5222-8060. 163 Malop St, GEELONG 3220.

**OLIVE OIL SOAPS**, handcrafted from quality natural ingredients, with no petro-chemicals or animal byproducts & not tested on animals. Pure & gentle for the whole family & extremely kind to dry or sensitive skin. For a range of delightfully fragrant soaps or fragrance free contact: Glen Murray Soaps, PO Box 435, YORK, WA 6032. Ph/fax: 08-9641-2068.

**BUCKWHEAT PILLOWS**, Australian grown buckwheat husks, no herbicides or pesticides. 100% Australian milled cotton cover. \$45 incl postage. Husks avail. Just Natural Ventures, 03-9481-1872, or email: [justnatural@bigfoot.com](mailto:justnatural@bigfoot.com) Trade enquiries welcome.

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Made with 100% pure plant oils. Free from all synthetic additives. Send SAE for free brochure: Homesteaders, M/S 172, ALLORA 4362. Email: [homesteaders@flexi.net.au](mailto:homesteaders@flexi.net.au)

**GREEN BARLEY, STEVIA, HERBAL FIBRE:** mail order: Wollnick, GPO Box 2859, Brisbane, 4001 (SAE). <http://www.geocities.com/HotSprings/Sauna/6571>.

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## FOOD AND KITCHEN

**BEE POLLEN:** Thank you, and best wishes to my clients over past years. I hope you will support Adrian & Meridith Sciberras, who will continue my business. John Read.

**BEE POLLEN**, no additives, 450 g sample pack \$10. 1.9 kg pack \$35, 4.3 kg pack \$70, 14 kg drum \$185. Prices include p&p. A & M Sciberras, PO Box 15, RAMCO 5322.

**HOME STONE FLOUR MILLS** – mill your own stoneground wholemeal flour for cakes and bread at home with a Retsel Little Ark stone flour mill. Endorsed by Housewives Association. Write for catalogue to: Retsel Distributors, PO Box 712, DANDENONG 3175, encl 3 postage stamps. Ph: 03-9795-2725. Distributor enquiries welcome.

**YOGHURT MAKERS, DECOR DAIRYO.** Cost \$28 incl Express Post within Australia. Send cheque/money order to: Novum Plastics, PO Box 192, FERNTREE GULLY, Vic 3156. Ph: 03-9752-5666, Fax: 03-9752-6827.

## MISCELLANEOUS

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**NATURAL SKIN CARE PRODUCTS**, hand-made soaps & candles. Send SAE for catalogue of over 120 products. Forest Edge, 242 Albert St, MARYBOROUGH 4650.

**TRIDENT TIPIS.** Professional workmanship, quality materials, traditional designs. For brochure, samples and prices write to: 'Earth Mother Craft', 'Rosehill', Hayes Road, via MILLFIELD 2325. Ph: 02-4998-1147.

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### PLACING AN AD?

*See page 73 for details*

**HOW TO MAKE MONEY** selling & making chess pieces, bird baths, fine art, gnomes etc. Plaster and/or cement moulds. For methods + catalogue send \$14.95 to: Williams Imports, PO Box 989, SOUTHPORT 4215 (06/50 Railway St). Ph/fax: 07-5532-9050.

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**GLASSHOUSE**, aluminium frame, dismantle & take away. FREE. Ph: 03-9598-4664.

**THE OREA LINDA PROJECT**, putting a community/garden in isolated Aussie desert. Interested? Ph: 08-9192-1445, fax: 08-9192-3044, or send \$5 to: PO Box 930, BROOME 6725 for full particulars.

**CERAMIC PEDESTALS** for organic, bio & composting toilets. Plans avail. Ph: Peter, 02-6352-4268, 0408-112-859.

**SELF-SUFFICIENCY**, & natural products for sale by mail order. Send 2 x 45 cent stamps. VBM, PO Box 763, VENUS BAY 3956.

## COURSES

**HERBAL MEDICINE.** The School of Herbal Medicine, estab in Australia in 1985, offers a 1 year home study course. For details, write to PO Box 2310, TOOWOOMBA 4350.

**CORRESPONDENCE – PERMACULTURE DESIGN** Course. On completion you will have a full permaculture design & management plan for a property of your choice – to suit your needs. For more info contact: Annie Jenkins, PO Box 710, MALANDA, QLD 4885. Ph: 07-4096-6595, or email: nastus@hotmail.com

**Permaculture Education & Design Systems (PEDS), PERMACULTURE DESIGN CERTIFICATE COURSE.** When: February 4th – 19th 2000. Where: 7710 Bass Hwy, LEONGATHA SOUTH 3953. Teachers: Rick & Naomi Coleman, Andrew Jeeves, David Smith. Cost: \$575 (work exchange avail). Our 10 ac property was recently featured in *Permaculture International Journal* #72, & features integrated design & mud brick classroom on site. First 10 people to book (with deposit) get free copy of *Basics of Permaculture* by Ross Mars. Discount 15% for couples, special offer 4 for the price of 3. Cost includes lunches & morning & afternoon teas. Free camping on the property. Next design course May 2000 over 6 weekends in Frankston. Contact Naomi Coleman, PEDS, ph: 03-5664-3301 for course brochure, or email peds@tpg.com.au

**SUSTAINABLE SOIL FERTILITY** with Neil Kinsey, 4 day course, Jan 31–Feb 3, 2000, Princeton Convention Centre, Sale. For higher yields, lower costs, fewer pest & disease problems, irrigation savings, maximised nutrients. For info contact Robyn or Bill Grant, 03-5157-1586. Write: EGOAA, PO Box 1263, BAIRNSDALE 3875.

**THE HOLISTIC LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM** of Learning for 2000 and beyond is a workshop intensive over 6 days, incorporating many diverse & practical skills to help people to become more self-suff & empowered in their daily lives. Held in amazing energy & Earth setting at Brightside in Maleny, Queensland. Jan 15 – 29th, April 1 – 6th. Call Patricia or Alan on 07-5494-8999 for details. Website <http://athenaoz.com>

**CORRESPONDENCE STUDIES.** Diploma and certificate programmes, professionally recognised. Learn for personal interest or business practice. Select one brochure from: Aromatherapy, Vitamin & Nutrition therapy, Traditional Folk Medicine, Animal Medicine (The 'Green' Vet), Psychic Healing, Pre-school Childcare, Safety & Security Counselling, Personal Psychic Development, Traditional Wicca. New course: 'Herbs For All Ways And Always'. Wiccan Home Studies, PO Box 138, SURRY HILLS 2010. Ph: 02-9319-6166 BH only.

## LIVESTOCK

**MINIATURE AUSTRALIAN COMPANION PIGS**, seen on TV, original breeder estab 1978. Guaranteed, beware imitations. Brian, Ph/fax: 03-5966-7434. PO Box 36B, YARRA JUNCTION, Vic 3797. See GR 109.

**MEAT RABBITS**, breeders for sale. Information handbook. How To Get Started & Profit – \$10. Ph: 02-6558-8287.

**PIGEONS SUITABLE FOR SQUABBING:** American Kings and mix Reds, will sell as breeding pairs or singles, also young birds suitable to grow on to breeding. Breeding pairs \$20 a pr or \$11 ea plus freight. Ring after 6pm 02-4359-2553, or any time 0417-047-025.

## GARDEN & ORCHARD

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E-Mail: [bamboo@bamboo.oz.com.au](mailto:bamboo@bamboo.oz.com.au).

**EARTHWORMS. FREE**, the most comprehensive catalogue of books on this subject. Send a business size SAE to: Worm World, PO Box COA 51 (GR), The Esplanade, BALGAL BEACH Qld 4816. Ph/fax: 07-4770-7001.

**BAMBOO PLANTS**, lge range, best prices. Ph: 07-4129-4470, fax: 07-4129-0130.

**TREE GUARDS** all shapes/sizes from under 10 cents each. Bamboo stakes and weed-mats. International Reforestation Supplies, 510 Bellbird Rd, BAIRNSDALE 3875. Ph/fax: 03-5157-9404.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## GARDEN & ORCHARD

**RAINFOREST SEED COLLECTORS** national link-up. Buy and sell local seed. Our newsletter has lots to offer. Local seed grows better and doesn't pollute your gene pool. Quarterly newsletter subs \$20, concession \$10. Offer local seed - free subs. RSC, Private Mail Bag, BELLINGEN 2454. Ph: 02-6655-2233.

**TOBACCO SEED.** Organically grown (Virginian), cultivation and curing notes included. Send \$5 to Lyn O'Brien, C/- PO, BARMAH 3639.

**TOBACCO SEEDS, ORGANICALLY GROWN.** Seeds & instructions \$5. E Madge, PO Box 114, POMONA, Qld 4568 (MS626)

**GOURDS, SEEDS, BOOKS** avail now! In our new catalogue. Send 4 stamps to: The Gourdfather, PO Box 298GR, EAST MAITLAND 2323.

**LOOKING FOR HERITAGE** or traditional fruits & vegetables? Join the Heritage Seed Curators Association. Our regular 'Seed Listing' winter issue of The Curator lists the sources for thousands of vegie, herb & fruit varieties. Our summer issue has major articles, tips and notes about saving heirloom varieties. Membership costs \$25 PA or \$18 for low income earners. Contact HSCA, PO Box 1450, BAIRNSDALE, Vic 3875.

**'BUSHFOOD VEGETABLES'**, a comprehensive guide to growing 23 temperate bushfood species is now avail & incl 4 packets of seed. Send \$25 (cheque/money order) to: D Mather, PO Box 7115, BEAUMARIS 3193. Ph: 03-9521-6749. [www.expage.com/page/bushfood](http://www.expage.com/page/bushfood).

**LUNAR PLANTING GUIDE:** Plant in rhythm with the moon. Experience the abundant results of this age-old practice. This is not a calendar, it is an eternal guide. Send \$12 (postage incl) to: 'Crazy Wisdom', PO Box 88, SEDDON, Vic 3011.

**'USEFUL WEEDS AT OUR DOORSTEP'**, a book by Pat Collins (herbalist). The 40 weeds in this book have a line drawing, description, medicinal use, farm & garden uses, when to harvest & recipes. \$15 + \$3.50 post, \$24 + \$3.50 post with colour pictures. T.H.E. Centre, 196 Bridge St, MUSWELLBROOK 2333. Ph: 02-6541-1884, fax: 02-6541-4046.

**SAFFRON - CROCUS SATIVUS** - biodynamically grown stigmas, 1 g \$10 + SAE, corms ea \$2.50, 10 corms incl info & P & H, \$30. Avail until March. Ruth Enders, RMB 712, RAGLAN 3373. Ph: 03-5349-7325.

**TAGASTE, TREE LUCERNE SEEDS**, new stock. Packets over 20 grams - \$6 incl postage. Karoola Seeds, PO Box 11, STUART TOWN 2820. Ph: 02-6846-8313.

**TOBACCO SEEDS**, organically grown (Virginian), cultivation and curing notes included for \$5. Also available, *Australian Tobacco. How to grow, cure, treat and cut your own.* A well researched book by John van der Linden for \$15 (postage included) from Lyn O'Brien, C/- PO, BARMAH, Vic, 3639.

**COMPANION PLANTING CHART:** over 90 vegetables, herbs and fruits, including plants as insect repellents. Sow when Chart: Suggested sowing times for 100 vegetables, herbs and flowers. Mail order \$7 each + \$3 p&p. Plum Products (G), PO Box 120, Wards Rd, TAMBO UPPER, 3885.

DEADLINES: GR137 - DEC 20TH  
GR138 - FEB 28TH

## HOLIDAYS

**MORUYA - FAR SOUTH COAST NSW**, romantic 1 b/r and family 2 b/r bush cabins. Big open fires. \$250 per week. \$100 per weekend. Ph: 02-4474-2542, pm.

**COFFS HARBOUR/KIA-ORA FARM HOLIDAYS.** Cosy self-contained cottage, sleeping 6 people, 100 ac organic certified farm. Enjoy river frontage, pool, canoeing & fishing. From \$245 week for 2 person. Ph/fax: 02-6654-3561.

E-mail [www.midcoast.au/~kia-ora](http://www.midcoast.au/~kia-ora).

**LAMINGTON GLEN**, r/forest retreat, secluded cabin - everything supplied except food. Ph: 07-5544-8166.

**ORGANIC HOLIDAY FARM**, 'Heron on Earth', 20 km east Devonport, near beaches, central to Tasmania's wild places. Fully equipped modern solar house, sleeps seven. Rates incl bedding, towels & organic produce in season. Canoes & bikes avail. Ph: 03-6428-6144. [heron@southcom.com.au](mailto:heron@southcom.com.au)

**MT BUFFALO LODGE**, Mt Buffalo Nat Pk, NE Victoria. [www.mtbuffalochoalet.com.au](http://www.mtbuffalochoalet.com.au) Do you enjoy bushwalking, trout fishing, canoeing at sunset, abseiling, mountain bike riding or simply relaxing with great company & good food? YES, then the Mt Buffalo Lodge is the place for you. Please call for a reservation on 1800-037-038.

## SERVICES OFFERED

**MUD BRICK (EARTHWALL) TESTING** - certificate for council. Effluent Disposal design (AS1547) for domestic premises. Soil testing. Hackett Laboratory Services, 4/8 Bellbowrie St, PORT MACQUARIE 2444. Ph: 065-832-635. Fax: 065-837-453.

**HOME PLANS.** 'The Earth Builders Plan Catalogue' (180 pages): 92 plans for handcrafted buildings (83 homes and 9 workshops, cabins, and carports) of mud brick, rammed earth, stone, poleframe, timber, poured earth, strawbale, construction details; usable sample working of a home (12 x A3 sheets). Mail \$68 (p&p incl) to: John Barton - Building Design, 31 Sharp St, NEWTOWN, Vic 3220. Phone and enquiries to: 03-5222-5774 for fixed quote to draw and document your home plan. Bankcard, Visa, Mastercard, cheques accepted. Free brochure available.

**THE PRIMAL EXPERIENCE** enables you to contact and integrate the real you, to discover dormant abilities & potentials that you may have lost touch with. Those repressed aspects of yourself which give rise to discontentment, depression, anxiety & the inability to relax or assert yourself, can be resolved by feeling your true feeling which heals the split between your mind & body allowing your true spirit to shine through. You can find real pleasure & peace. Ph: 03-5441-3683.

## FOR SALE

**AIR WIND TURBINES.** Air 403 400 W \$950. Made in the USA, 3 yr warranty. Soma or Windseeker turbines avail in 12, 24 and 48 V models. The 12 Volt Shop 08-9458-1212, fax: 08-9458-1977.

**CANON SOLAR PANELS.** At last the breakthrough in price and technology that you've been waiting for! Canon's incredible super module can produce up to 5 amps charge similar to 80 watt BP & SOLAREX units, but deliver superior overall performance & value as they are shadow-tolerant, lightweight & virtually indestructible. Combine this with a 20 year warranty & you should realise why crystalline panels are now virtually obsolete, & why Energy Australia recently installed 200,000 watts of them at the new Singleton solar power station. Super deal to Grass Rooters only, only \$499. Cheap freight. Ph: Universality Of The Sun, 04-1893-4607.

**SELECTRONIC INVERTERS.** Model SE-12/24, maximum 2000 watts, only \$999. Model SE-22, maximum 5000 watts, only \$1999. SE-30, maximum 6500 watts, only \$2550. All units are true sine-wave. These are special mail order prices for Grass Rooters only. Ph: Universality Of The Sun, 04-1893-4607.

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**SOLAR TECHNOLOGY DESIGNERS CATALOGUE 1999/2000.** Now entering its 10th year & still shining, this authoritative 160 page manual/catalogue is endorsed by thousands of Grass Rooters as their renewable energy bible! Written by leading solar engineer Christopher Darker in a unique easy-to-read style & divided into 15 chapters, it covers critical topics of energy self-suff: formulating an energy budget, power system sizing, solar panels, trackers, wind generators, batteries, inverters, energy efficient appliances, passive solar buildings & a vast range of related issues. From beginners to experts this is undoubtedly the first & perhaps the only book to read before designing, purchasing or assembling a renewable energy system. Includes discount trade price lists that could save you thousands. Only \$79. To order ph: Universality Of The Sun, 04-1893-4607.

**TWO IGLOO FRAMES** 6 x 30 metre, \$1500. Igloo cover, 6 x 30 metre, white solar weave, \$800. Ph: 07-4666-1699.

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**Advertisers please remember to include all preferred contact details within your ad and include them in your word count. Phone numbers do need an area code included.**

# GRASSIFIEDS

## FOR SALE

**SEA INVERTERS**, SEAP-24-900 max 2700 watts, \$1399. SEAP-12-1K3 max 3900 watts, \$1799. SEAP-24-2K2 max 6000 watts, \$2199. SEAP-24-3KO max 9000 watts, \$2999. All units are true sine wave. *Grass Roots* mail order only. Ph: Universality Of The Sun, 04-1893-4607 for total satisfaction!

**EXIDE ENERGYSTORE BATTERIES**. We have been supplying these premium grade home power system batteries for 17 yrs, so we know they will last 10 yrs or more in a correctly designed system. Model 12RP670 (8000 watt-hours), \$999. Model 24RP830 (20,000 watt-hours), \$2279. Model 24RP1350 (32,400 watt-hours), \$3995. Cheap freight. Ph: Universality Of The Sun, 04-1893-4607

**GAS INCUBATOR**, 300 egg, VGC. Can be seen working. \$650 ONO. Ph: 03-5185-1205.

**MUD BRICKS**, approx 200; 200 x 400 x 150 mm; \$100. **SAW BENCH**, completely set up incl PTO drive, tracks, trolleys, blower, any offer considered. Ph: 03-6250-3434, Peter (Tasmania).

**MANNING WHITE CORN SEED**, \$3.50 per kg + postage. Ph: 02-6558-3133.

**HYDRAULIC EARTH BRICK PRESS** with paddle mixer. \$3500. Ph: 03-6298-3291.

**INVERTERS, GENERATORS & BATTERIES**. The 12 Volt Shop is proud to be distributor for Onan, Honda and Dunlite generators. We also sell Selectronic, SEA, and Latronics, inverters, a range of batteries incl GNB (Energy Store & Solar Store) and Battery Energy (SunCycle & SunGel). For the best price, The 12 Volt Shop 08-9458-1212, fax: 08-9458-1977.

**CERAMIC PEDESTALS** for bio, organic & composting toilets. Ph: 02-6352-4268, or 0408-112-859.

**IRRABINA MOHAIR**, 50 g balls, natural, 70% mohair, 30% wool, grown & processed in Australia, \$6/ball + postage. 'Irrabina', YARROWYCK 2358. Ph: 02-6775-5546.

**CANON 64 W SOLAR PANELS** \$540/roof integrated models \$439. Free freight to major centres! Siemens, Solarex, Kyocera and BP solar modules, solar trackers, solar regulators and cabling are also avail. The 12 Volt Shop 08-9458-1212, fax: 08-9458-1977.

**SOLAR TECHNOLOGY BOOKS**. Real value for money! *Home power - The Hands on Journal of Home-made Power*, issued bimonthly \$7.99, *Remote Area Power Supply Systems - An Introduction*, by the Solar Energy Industries Association of Australia \$30. *Renewable Energy Power Systems - Independent Power Supplies for Homes*, by Energy Victoria \$20, *Guidelines for Building an Energy Efficient Home*, by Energy Victoria \$5. Free 70 page catalogue. The 12 Volt Shop, U4/12 Kewdale Rd, WELSHPOOL WA. Ph: 08-9458-1212, fax: 08-9458-1977.

## CLUBS

**NATIONAL ALLERGY ASSOCIATION** of Australia (NAAA) and ECO-CHOICE (our mail-order store). Enquiries; information; clinics; membership & catalogue. Contact NAAA, PO Box 48, HARRIS PARK, NSW 2150. Email: naaaauz@yahoo.com. Ph: 04-1324-1166

## PLACING AN AD?

See page 73 for details

**AFFILIATED DONKEY SOCIETIES OF AUSTRALIA**. For info on membership, magazines and help avail write to Mr Ralph Grinly, 18 Inverness Rd, Sth Penrith, NSW 2750. You will be contacted by the representative in your state.

## CALENDAR EVENTS

**SEYMOUR ALTERNATIVE FARMING EXPO**, 18 - 20 Feb 2000, rural & sml enterprise exhibits, craft, DIY, lectures, animals, great food. Prospective exhibitors ph: 03-5799-1211 for details.

**GROW ORGANIC 2000**, March 18 - 19, Camp Coolamatong, Banksia Peninsula near Bairnsdale (Vic). Speakers: Peter Fraser, Jason Alexander, Dr John Williams, Sue Smart, Phil Rowe. Great organic food, camping or bunk style accom. Contact Robyn & Bill Grant, 03-5157-1586. PO Box 1263, BAIRNSDALE 3875.

**MOORA MOORA FESTIVAL**, Feb 26, noon till late. This year's theme: Giving Children A Future. Sustainable technologies, alternative building, health, conservation, sustainable farming. Music & entertainment culminates in open-air bush dance. \$20/car, \$15/person, \$5/person low income, children under 16 free. All enq call: 03-5962-4104.

## CONTACTS

### NEW SOUTH WALES

**CHRISTIAN SINGLES**, all ages, all denominations. Send for FREE COLOUR brochure to: 5 Grange Ave, MARYLAND NSW 2287 or [www.christiansingles.com.au](http://www.christiansingles.com.au)

**MALE** 35 yr old Taoist-Buddhist based philosophy, N/S, S/D, lives in motor-home on 400 ha. Into: adventure, travelling, cycling, reading, alternative healing, blues & classical music. Unto: TV, city living, negative or dishonest people. Wishes to enchant female who is honest, caring, adventurous & of independent mind. C/- John, PO Box 40, KARVAH 2324.

**IF YOU ARE INTO PERMACULTURE**, love nature, wildlife, domestic pets, especially birds, old music, comedies and horror movies, tenpin, darts, or just being at home creative with self-sufficiency; dislike news, commercialism, drugs, poisons and housing development, are male between 35 and 45 and live near Thirrmere NSW, lets meet. I'm a busy working woman with above interests, seeking similar, kind, humorous fella for lifetime r/ship. Prefer n/s and must be able to share life with pets and hobbies. Ph: Sharon, 02-4683-1809.

**ATTRACTIVE LIFE-LOVING GREENIE LADY** (50s) & her enchanted forest/garden looking for someone to love & cherish them. Reply to: hearts2001@ozemail.com.au, or 'Greenie' (GR136), PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

*Don't forget the deadline  
if wishing to advertise in  
Grass Roots*

**COUPLE SEEKING WOMAN**, mid-north coast couple (m39, f33) with (80% finished) large bush home & 3 well behaved children (3,5,7) seek woman with young child to incl in every way as part of their family, on perm basis. Into honesty, not into heavy drinkers, heavy drug users, or religious fanatics. Ph: 02-6550-4028.

**THINKING, LOVING MAN**, 30 - 45, welcome to join me in partnership, growing organic food, laughing & travelling. I am an attractive, active, intelligent woman, 38, n/s, n/d. I enjoy children. My interests incl literature, music & escaping to the bush. If you are into creating & maintaining friendships & revel in compost making, reply: Aries (GR136), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

### QUEENSLAND

**COUPLE SEEKS COUPLE OR WOMAN** to 40 years to share challenging, intimate, growthful lifestyle, at our SW Qld Property. Rent negotiable. SE (GR136), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**SUBURBAN GR FEMALE**, mid forties, looking for GR male in Brisbane. Write to: 'Suburban' (GR 136), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**AWAKENING CAPRICORN/AQUARIUS** man, 43, healthy mind, body & spirit, n/s, s/d. handy, honest, loyal, good provider. Christian morals, Reiki master, survivalist concepts, Ulysses member, travelled, educated. Good job & future. Average 9 till 5? No way! Reaching, searching for soul mate, share life's adventures. Self-suff girl at heart with green thumb (organic), good cook, happy in herself. No tobacco, powders or needles thanks. Ph: Ian, 0408-154-767.

**VEGETARIAN MALE**, 47 years, intelligent, slim & health conscious, naturally affectionate, gentle & caring. I enjoy the outdoors, gardening, cooking & most of all, taking care of someone I love. Seeking a sensitive, caring woman (or mother & child) to share a simple, peaceful lifestyle on my beautiful country property (or yours). Wayne Pollard, PO Box 235, GIN GIN 4671. Ph: 07-4157-2736.

### VICTORIA

**ENLIGHTENED, SLIM, SOBER**, n/s, affectionate male, seeking, spiritual, mature, female partner. See ad, Victoria GR135, for contact: Anutosh, 33 Joan Ave, FERNTREE GULLY, Vic 3156.

**FEMALE INTREPID TRAVELLER** living on Vic coast; mid 40s, n/s, health conscious, now seeking partner, with view to stability and companionship; an honest, good, caring, open-minded male, 35 - 48 years. Interests incl: natural therapies, sharing travel stories, eco-tourism, bushwalking, music, festivals and yoga. Please reply: Traveller (GR136), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**COUNTRY MAN**, 42, 5'11" medium build. I work in Melb. On weekend travel home. Widowed, 3 kids. Seek down-to-earth lady with gentle nature. I love the bush, beach, horse riding, animals, kids and growing vegies. PS: have long hair and beard. Please ph: 0417-514-808.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## CONTACTS

### VICTORIA

**HI, MY NAME IS IAN,** I am 53 yrs old, single, never been married, my star sign is Leo. I am 170 cm tall, I am a n/s & only light s/d. I am a fair haired person, blue-eyed, broad-shouldered and have a fairly solid build. My nationality is Australian. I have a secure job as a canteen manager & I am financially secure. My religion is Christian. I consider myself to be a quiet, tidy, easy-going person, gentle, caring, friendly, down-to-earth. I am not into drugs. I am mechanically-minded & a good handyman. I have a wide range of interests. The lady I'd like to meet should be single, no ties, 39 to 51 age group give or take a year, who dresses casually like myself, who has a view to friendship & companionship with a view to perm r/ship if compatible. Photo appreciated but not necessary. I live in the outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne by myself. I also own my own house & car. All photos returned safely. All replies will be answered. I am willing to travel anywhere in Victoria to meet a suitable lady. All replies to be sent to: Ian (GR136), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**LOVING, PEACEFUL** 31 yr old female seeking wholesome man to share simple pleasures of life. Well travelled, spiritual, have passion for music and a love of nature. If you're genuine, please write, I'd love to hear from you. Julie (GR 136), C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**INTELLIGENT, CARING,** loving and romantic 29 yr old gentleman seeks loving and friendly female for r/ship. Write: PO Box 1103, NORTH BLACKBURN, Victoria 3130.

**CREATIVE MAN,** 51, 5'9", n/s, s/d, wood-worker, musician, astrologer, herbalist, enjoys quiet life on 5 ac, north-central Vic. Seeks artistic, creative, classical-music-loving woman, approx 40 to 52 for 'my place or yours' r/ship. I am not looking for a live-in partner. Reply: Michael (GR136) PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**SINGLE WORKING DAD,** 188 cm 88 kg, well preserved, two kids, financially secure, Harley owner. Live on a couple ac central Vic. Into fishing, nature & home life. Seeking slim easy-going lady to 40 yrs, kids welcome, to pursue the dream together. Ph: 0418-315-620.

### ALL STATES & TERRITORIES

**AUSTRALIAN MALE,** 31 yrs old, medium build. I like music, movies, books & relaxation. I'm honest, caring & hard working. I seek a young Asian lady, 17 - 25, slim build, who has a loving & caring nature. Marriage minded. Ph: Stuart on 07-4168-4106, or write to: 45 Barnes Street, GOOMERI 4601.

**TOM** (writer, 66) seeks correspondence with similar ladies. Homoeopathy, e-commerce, DTP, organics. Ph: 02-4226-3738. Box 505, WOLLONGONG East 2520.

DEADLINES: GR137 - DEC 20TH  
GR138 - FEB 28TH

## LATE GRASSIFIEDS

### TOWER POWER GEOMANCY SERVICES:

Do you live in a healthy home? • Surveys • Energy adjustments • Towers of Power • Books & Magazines • One-day workshops nth NSW & Victoria Feb - March 2000. Send SAE to: PO Box 1263, LISMORE 2480.

**MID NORTH COAST - TOWN 15 MINUTES,** 177 ac, handy yet tranquil. Valleys, ridge, good access, perm crk, organic flats, swimming holes, r/forest gully, ph, elec, house sites. \$125,000. BEECHWOOD (Port Macquarie area). Ph: 02-6584-9902.

**HUON VALLEY,** spacious, solid, 4 b/r, C1936, o/fires, w/shops, 18 ac, f/trees, much more, self-suff, cattle, etc. \$79,000 ONO. Ph: 03-6297-1991.

**PEAK CROSSING,** 3 b/r Queenslander features front porch, plaster ceilings, timber archway, a/c lounge/dining room. There is 30 x 20 lu shed with 2 car accom & workshop area. Property is 12 ac, 2 good dams, shady trees & plenty of feed, great position for access to Bris. Ips, or B'Desert Primary & High School, easy access. \$119,000 ONO. Ph: 07-5467-2378.

**GLEN INNES AREA,** 100 ac, natural forest with spring-fed crk & lge granite boulders, all backing onto Butterleaf State Forest. Ideal bush retreat. \$39,500. Ph: 07-5465-4091.

**FRUITARIANISM ENTHUSIAST,** aged 46, male, seeks woman who wants to raise children to follow Jainism philosophy & build fruitarian ecosystem habitats for many animals. If this is your life-goal here is my phone number: 07-4091-5191.

**THORA/BELLINGEN** - 5 ac, r/forest, natural spring-fed dam with pump. Backs onto nat pk. Cabin & caravan with potbelly, wood-stove, gas stove, fridge, ph, solar, bath, compost toilet, generator. With over 20 estab f/trees, 56 sq m workshop, 8 km to town. \$90,000. Ph: Bruce, 02-6655-8531 AH, 02-6655-0808 BH.

**AUSTRALIAN MALE, PISCES,** late 40s, div, no kids, 6ft tall, brown hair, blue eyes, good sense of humour. Enjoys country life (has own 4 ac in Southern Highlands), horse riding, nature, animals, candlelit dinners, rain on the roof, movies, beach walks, swimming, seeks similar female for perm r/ship. Age, nationality open, kids OK, photo appreciated. Reply: Kyran, C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

**MOVING INTO LIGHT:** Anybody/any soul bringing to r/ship total spiritual commitment, honouring self & partner with complete emotional honesty, Full birthdate, particulars. Adventress, C/- 38 Elizabeth Ave, SOUTH GOLDEN BEACH 2483.

### ANSWERING A CONTACT AD?

Please put each letter in a separate stamped envelope addressed C/- GR. We will re-address & forward it. Don't forget to put the issue number on reply, i.e: Skye (GR 128) . . .

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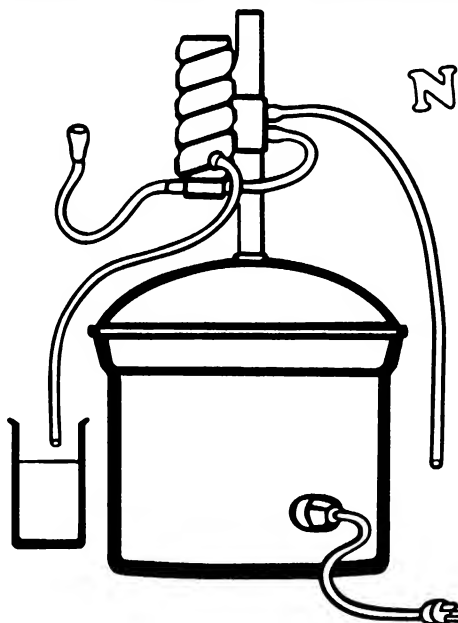
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